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ILA DEVI
in
BAZIGAR
(Ranjit)

filmindia

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104, Apollo Street, Fort, BOMBAY.
Editor : BABURAO PATEL

Vol. 5 FEBRUARY 1939 No. 2.

GIVE US A SQUARE DEAL

With the National Planning Committee planning the industrial future of the country, it is necessary to define the place and purpose of the Indian film industry in the future planning of a new nation.

The Indian film industry is 25 years old this year. Today it employs over 40,000 people in its different branches. Over 17 crores of rupees have been so far invested in the Indian film industry. We have over 1300 cinemas spread over the country, including touring cinemas and over 40 regular film producing companies. We have nearly 85 journals and periodicals solely devoted to the industry. Every year the Indian film industry requires raw films worth over 40 lakhs of rupees. The machinery and accessories we buy from foreigners every year cost us about 20 lakhs of rupees. And with all this material, our film industry produces about 200 films per year. The industry spends every year on these pictures Rs. 2,00,00,000 at the average rate of Rs. 1,00,000 per picture.

Now let us see what the industry pays out by way of taxes, duties, interest and advertisement.

In 1937-38 over Rs. 2,00,000 were paid as import duty on machinery.

Over Rs. 4,66,451 were paid as import duty on raw films.

Over Rs. 15,00,000 were paid to the railways for transit.

In addition to this nearly 20 lakhs of rupees were paid out as income-tax to the Central Government. Add to this the entertainment tax paid to the different provincial governments (which works out at 10% of the gross takings), electric tax (generally heavier for the film industry than for the others.)

In short it is assumed that the Indian film industry has been giving to the Government nearly half-a-crore of rupees every year in different taxes and duties. Since 1929 up to now the Government must have received over 5 crores of rupees from the Indian film industry, apart from previous revenue which cannot be assessed for want of sufficient statistical information.

As against this revenue during all these years, the Government has spent exactly Rs. 1,93,900 in appointing the Cinematograph Enquiry Committee in 1927, the report and recommendations of which Committee have been shelved as usual.

In addition to all these taxes and payments to public utility concerns such as the Railways and the Electric Companies and minor taxes to the local bodies like the municipalities and the Local Boards, the Indian film industry pays out nearly 45 lakhs of rupees per year to the newspapers in advertising alone.

And just because of all this, the Indian film industry ranks seventh in importance and is considered a key industry.

An industry with these vast country wide proportions and influence must find an important place in the scheme of national planning.

In Germany the film industry is controlled and aided by the Government. It is an all important instrument of propaganda and education. In Italy, the industry is also controlled by the Government to build a new nation, while to the Soviet the film has been one of three important planks of national propaganda—the other two being the press and the radio. The French Government has been spending a large amount every year to produce more and more educational pictures. Even the Government of the United Kingdom has been providing protection to its national film industry by a Quota Act, Tariff barriers and the Cinematograph Act of 1927, (which has been recently revised).

The world and other nations have been travelling fast to protect their film industry and use it to the full for educating their people and consolidating their national ideals.

India has been doing nothing of the sort so far. The Government has been merely pocketing a huge revenue from year to year for the last 25 years.

The National Planning Committee must take this matter in hand seriously. Some of the problems which should recommend themselves to the attention of the Committee are as follows:—

1. Quota Act—to enforce exhibition of a certain percentage of Indian films in all theatres—to enforce compulsory exhibition of newsreels, documentary and educational films in all theatres as a side programme with the main feature.

2. State aid for the production of newsreels, educational and documentary films.

3. Supplying projectors to schools, colleges and industrial institutions for the spread of visual education and the national language (Hindusthani.)

4. Providing a Central Advisory Board for the Indian films on the lines of the British Film Institute.

5. Establishing a Central Technical Institute for the training of talent and for carrying on further research.

6. Grant of scholarships for technical training overseas.

7. Grant of medals and awards of merit for a certain standard of efficiency and new research work.

8. Establishment of a State Bank for the financial backing of the industry.

9. Preventing foreign financiers from obtaining control over Indian film industry. (This danger is imminent now).

10. Protective tariff in imports of films and machinery.

11. Increase of valuation and duty on exposed films.

12. Establishing a factory for manufacturing raw films and other photographic materials, preferably a state-aided concern.

13. Stopping the foreigners from securing theatres or a chain of theatres, as is being slowly done at present.

14. Banning and generally overhauling the censoring rules to keep out pictures ridden with sex and crime.

15. Investigating possibilities of foreign markets for Indian films.

16. Scrapping the entertainment tax and reducing electric and other charges proportionately.

17. Providing unemployment insurance.

18. Stricter enforcement of the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Factories Act.

19. Licensing the theatre operators and providing to them facilities and protection.

These are some of the problems which the National Planning Committee must face when preparing their plans for the Indian film industry.

The object of National Planning is to improve the life of the community, mould its economic existence, widen its outlook on life, provide it a higher stake to live and compete, secure equitable distribution of the rewards of labour and last but not the least, create a patriotic desire for the building of a new nation. And for all this, what else can be a more powerful instrument of propaganda than a cinema film?

"Young as the industry is, the burden of its future development rests upon the provincial governments whose concern it is to surround it with conditions calculated to promote its growth and popularity." These remarks in the recent communique issued by the Government of India while clearly defining the rights of the provincial governments also throws on them a great responsibility.

Will our film industry get a square deal? Let us wait and see.

MR. HIRLEKAR'S PIONEERING CONTRIBUTION

Unless one finds out for himself the unfortunate fact that it is almost next to impossible to get any correct information and collect the various statistics about our film industry either from the different governments or from those actually working in the industry, one cannot realize the importance of the invaluable contribution of Mr. K. S. Hirlekar in publishing his new booklet "Place of Film in National Planning".

In a foreword to this all important log of reliable facts and figures about the industry, the Hon. Mr. K. M. Munshi, the Home Minister to the Government of Bombay says "Mr. K. S. Hirlekar, who has considerable experience in the subject and has taken pains to study the question from all its aspects has written a thought provoking pamphlet. It gives an idea to the reader as to the role, the film has played in other countries of the world and what are the difficulties in the way of its playing a similar role effectively in India."

Written in an unmercifully patriotic spirit the little book bristles with facts and figures eloquent of the apathy with which the Central and the Provincial Governments have so far looked at the Indian film industry.

We recommend the book to all serious students of our film industry, but particularly point out its significance as a practical help to the National Planning Committee.

THE PRICE OF POPULARITY

The price of a single copy of "filmindia" will be eight annas from the month of March. The annual subscription will however remain the same —that is Rs. 5 per year for inland and Rs. 8 for foreign countries.

Why has the price to be put up? Well, popularity has its own price. The sales of "filmindia" have been going up for the last 18 months and

to-day its overwhelming popularity threatens to cut down its existence if we continue to sell the copies at the old price.

We do not want to make large profits nor do we want to lose on it. In this business of publishing magazines, as soon as a periodical becomes popular the cost of paper and printing increases, while the revenue from advertisements and sales practically remains the same. It does not therefore pay to sell more copies, unless we increase the price and allow the demand to grow.

"filmindia" being a profusely illustrated magazine with an excellent get-up becomes an expensive publication. To keep the old price would compel us to reduce the standard of production which we are sure our readers would not like.

The only alternative therefore was to raise the price, which we hope our readers will accept, with their usual spirit of friendliness.

The new price is prompted by our anxiety to give to our readers a better magazine every month.

Subscribers' Prize Scheme.

The Result

The prizes are awarded as follows to the following subscribers. Subscribers holding the winning numbers are requested to forward their copies, in tact without tearing the page, to our office before the 15th April 1939 and the prize amount will be remitted by M.O. After the 15th April 1939 no claims will be entertained.

1st Prize	Copy No.	3865
2nd		2846
3rd		850
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5th		961

The next 20 prizes are awarded to the following numbers: 2305, 3485, 4506, 4448, 3396, 3864, 2843, 2878, 3869, 4932, 4937, 4205, 4218, 3250, 2300, 3167, 3148, 4925, 4230, 2845.

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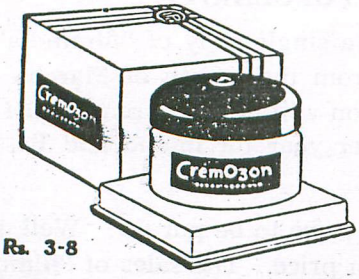

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A PRAYER IN TEARS!

PADMA DEVI—

In "Zamana" a Krishin picture this excellent artiste gives another superb performance. Where is she going next?

"Bazigar" a picture produced by Ranjit is a thrilling melodrama. Here are some action stills of the picture which is now running at the West End Cinema, Bombay.

BOMBAY CALLING

This section is the monopoly of "JUDAS" and he writes what he likes and about things which he likes. The views expressed here are not necessarily ours, but still they carry weight because they are written by a man who knows his job.

SARDAR OF THE INDUSTRY

We do not like to use foreign parallels when we have in our country men who even without the luck and opportunities of those foreign dictators like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, have in them the power to sway the nation with their utter sincerity and patriotism. One of such great men is Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel a symbol of discipline and power, in grim pursuit of the patriotic ideal of liberating our country.

To us the Sardar is worth more than all those foreign dictators put together. The Sardar is also known for quick decision and grim determination.

In the last one month the industry has jumped a year ahead in activities. A month back men were sleeping and things were lying in a dull stupor. Then came the eloquent and stirring appeal of Mr. Chandulal Shah to all in the industry to wake up and celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Indian film industry. Mr. Shah wanted to vindicate the progress of 25 years by organising a stunning show that would take the breath away from our foreign competitors and open the eyes of the authorities and the people by stressing the importance of the film industry in the life of a nation which is still groaning under the shackles of foreign bondage.

Sardar Chandulal Shah

In a day things changed, and the irresistible enthusiasm of Mr. Shah took the others by storm and with a submission and unity unknown to them before, they all fell in a line to make the Silver Jubilee celebrations a grand success.

Meetings upon meetings, for the first time fully crowded. were convened. Complete unanimity ruled and decisions were taken and resolutions were passed. Press sheets went out to the papers with hot news of the activities and the industry began to throb once again with new life. All under the Chairmanship of Mr. Chandulal Shah, who ruled out objections with a deft gesture that would do honour to Chanakya. It was some achievement to bring together the different warring elements who had constantly quarreled amongst themselves goaded by jealousy, under one banner of a common celebration.

The recent press communique issued by the Government of India, right in the wake of a deputation that waited upon the Hon. Commerce Member, Sir Mahomed Zafarulla Khan under the guidanee of Mr. Chandulal Shah is the direct result of the agitation and propaganda by the Indian Motion Picture Congress.

Let us go a little behind the scenes to give our compliments to the man who deserves them for these unique results. When the proposal of leading a deputation to the Hon. Commerce Member came up for discussion before the Executive Committee of the Motion Picture Congress, the majority, not realizing the far reaching importance of such propaganda, seemed definitely set up against the idea.

And for two hours the pros and the cons were discussed with no decision. It was the moment for a strong man to step in with grim determination. Mr. Chandulal Shah stepped in and in doing so stepped on the opposition, with the result that the deputation was ultimately led with such significant and important result as is embodied in the press communique of the Government of India.

We are sure that Sardar Chandulal Shah will make the Silver Jubilee Celebrations a success, even if it comes to only one man doing it. That is grim determination and sincerity of purpose.

Are we wrong in calling him the Sardar of the Indian film industry?

HULLO! DR. GILDER?

Once again we find an unholy mess in the timings of our cinema shows. Since the order of the Commissioner of Police to close down all the cinemas in the city by 12-45 a.m., the timings of the shows have become so erratic and unregulated that it is almost next to impossible for the audiences to arrive in good time for any show.

The first matinee show on holidays starts anywhere between 1-30 and 2-30. The variations in this range are 1-45, 2, 2-15. The usual first show on a week day starts between 4 and 5-15. The second show shifts between 7-15 and 8 p.m., while the last show may begin anywhere between 9-45 and 10-30 p.m.

A collection of the advertisements for the shows gives the following timings: 1-30, 1-45, 2, 2-15, 2-30; 4, 4-15, 4-30, 4-45, 5, 5-15; 7-15, 7-30, 7-45, 8; 9-30, 9-45, 10, 10-15, 10-30. It is just mere luck that they don't begin a show at 10-35½ minutes.

The whole affair is too stupid and betrays a lack of unity in thought and action between the different departments of the film industry.

It is needless to state that the audience which never knows when the shows will really begin, soon gets tired and disgusted, with the inevitable result of a poor collection at the box-offices.

An appeal for commonsense has proved useless in the case of the distributors or the exhibitors of the city.

But there is another side to this question, which must recommend itself to the attention of the Government.

As a general rule, Indian film programmes take 2½ hours for a single show. Some programmes are even longer.

This long programme, with the present show timings rubbing against one another, compels the showman to let out the audience of one show by one door while letting in the audience of the next show by the other door. This procedure has been going on for a number of years, even before the Police Commissioner ordered the theatres to close down at 12-45.

A visit to the theatres in the city brings to mind one paramount impression, that they have very few things in common with a modern well equipped show house. Some of the theatres, which still enjoy the indulgence of the Police Commissioner's license inspite of protests, are no better than pig sties without ventilation.

The average seating capacity of a theatre is 1000 persons. The minimum admission rate is four annas. The Indian film is more popular with the poor masses than with the other classes. The shows overlap one another with the result that the theatre is never empty—not even for five minutes—which means that the theatres are continuously occupied for over eleven hours. Hygiene and health are not things known to the poor of the city.

With these conditions prevailing for years, is it any wonder that our city cinema houses provide the best hothouses for breeding and transferring every disease?

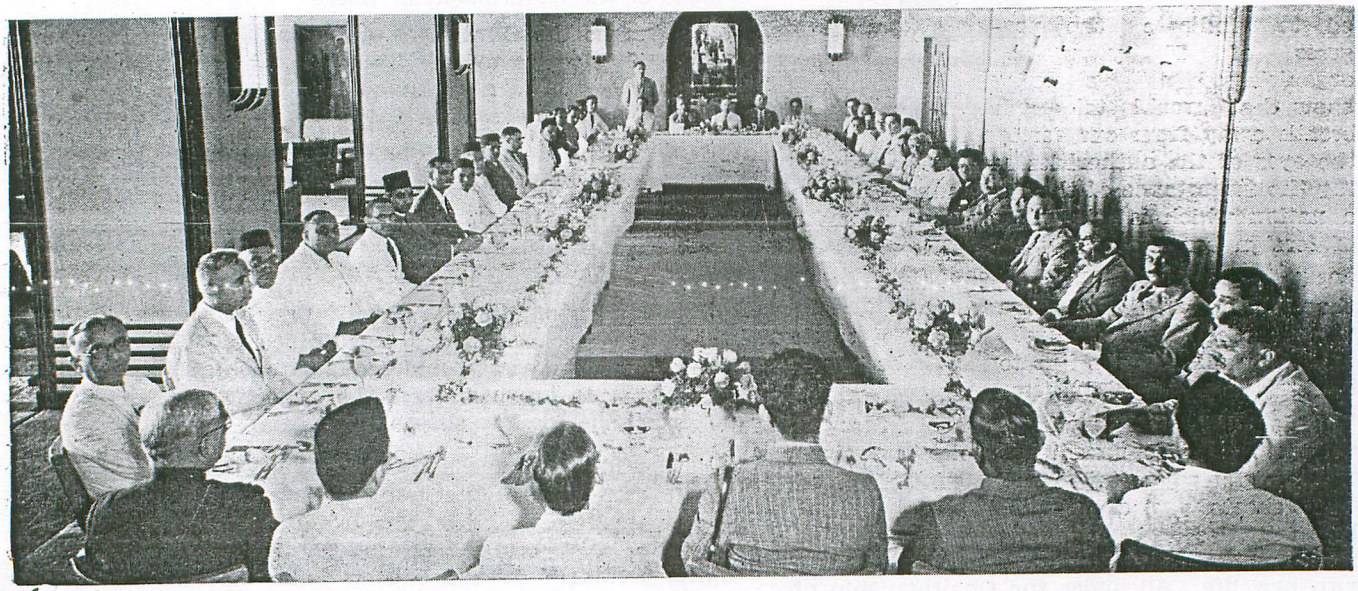
No cinema in the city, with the exception of a couple of English picture houses, has installed any air purifiers.

One wonders how this vital problem of public health has not yet struck the Hon. Dr. M. D. Gilder our Minister for Health. We find him rushing about in a sincere panic through the entire province, closing liquor shops, opening hospitals, giving grand speeches on health and hygiene and promising a heaven of health to the citizens, when these theatres, which are right under his nose, continue the tragic work of spreading disease in the city.

As a medical man, he will realise the necessity of clearing and purifying the air between two shows.

All over India, we find theatres having two shows per day, with a big interval between the two shows. But in Bombay, perhaps the most crowded city in the country, the theatres have three continuous shows without any intervals in between.

The urgent need of the hour is to fix the shows thus as to leave a minimum interval of thirty minutes between two shows. During this interval, the air purifiers must work full strength (provided it is made



It is obvious that Mr. Baburao Pai's partnership in Prabhat won the popular vote. When Mr. Jagannath Patel ("Bauer" representative in India) gave a luncheon at the Taj in Mr. Pai's honour, every prominent film personality, barring of course the stars, wielding big business was present—perhaps for the first time in the history of the film industry. Sardar Chandulal Shah presided at the function.

compulsory to install them), a batch of sweepers must sweep the floors, clean the seats and wash off 'pan' and spittle.

It must be made compulsory for the cinema owner to maintain a menial staff of at least 12 persons to give the auditorium a quick cleaning rub within half-an-hour. These men are more important to the public than the well fed managers and the half-sleepy door keepers we see at our theatres.

Air purifiers, at least four for a theatre with tested and certified capacity of purification, should be made as compulsory as the fire-extinguishers.

Complete compulsory disinfection about 3 times a week should be insisted upon, preferably under the guidance and supervision of the municipal authorities.

These are some of the things which our Minister for Health should start doing first. We do not want merely a minister for health. We want Health. Otherwise we get the other one who ministers at death.

NEW AIR PURIFIERS

That brings to mind a new invention which gave us a bit of a pleasant surprise the other day. We refer to "Lumitra" Ozone generators. It is an attractive gadget which gives a violet glow of light when working and while doing so spreads ozone in the room to purify. In science, Ozone is known as a more active state of oxygen which destroys bacilli. Ozone which is nature's medium for purifying, deodorizing and reactivating the air is formed by the passing of rays of the sun through the atmosphere.

These "Lumitra" Ozone generators seemed to do the job of purifying the air rather well and a bit quickly. We tried a generator at the office and thought it a marvellous improvement over the existing purifiers.

If these "Lumitra" people only had a bigger theatre model. then the problem of purifying the air in our theatres would soon be solved!

Beg your pardon, they have. These fellows must give us a free demonstration at one of our theatres.

A SECRETARY FOR THE CENSOR BOARD, PLEASE!

The Bombay Board of Film Censors needs a little re-organizing if the department is ever to be really useful to our film industry in addition to merely granting a paper certificate for films.

The British Board of Film Censors is a very useful institution. It is organized suitably to meet all the demands of the film industry and the film critics. It maintains complete statistics of the industry, peruses scenarios, passes posters and publicity and all this in addition to censoring features, educational and documentary films. The British Board is a well organized institution.

We can't say that of the Bombay Board of Film Censors. The Bombay Board has hardly got a secretary of its own.

MY ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN
Mr. G. C. MOTWANE
Managing Director,
CHICAGO TELEPHONE & RADIO CO., LTD.
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I am sure every parent will appreciate this view point and my service for the welfare of the present-day young men.
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129, Esplanade Rd., Fort, Bombay, Post Box 459
Recognized by Examining Bodies in India, England and America.

Some months back when Mr. J. O. Bartley, who was acting as the Secretary left, Mr. Pai, one of the inspectors took over his duties. Mr. Pai's first job is to peruse and pass films. After he finishes this job, he begins acting as a Secretary.

A very queer procedure for a permanent department. Isn't it?

Mr. Bartley was a part time man as others, previous to him, have also been. His principal job was in the Elphinstone College, so he attended the Censor office for 2 hours every day. And for these two hours, he got Rs. 350 a month, a salary at which the Government can get a well qualified man for full time work.

The Censor department is self-maintained. The Government has not to spend on it. And yet no effort is being made to organize this department on modern lines to meet the demands of the industry.

Men in the industry want statistics for guidance and information about contemporary institutions in the other parts of the world. Who else should supply this information but the Censor Board? The British Board of Censors does. Why shouldn't our Board do it?

A whole time Secretary, of course a qualified Indian, can certainly do all this and make Mr. Pai free to examine films, which is his main job.

MOTION PICTURE SOCIETY AND ITS NEW PRESIDENT

A communique issued by the Government of India states that the Motion Picture Society of India has been granted recognition by the Government by including it in the list of other recognised commercial bodies.

This should have been done long before. But even at this stage it is welcome as the Official recognition of the Society as the only representative body in the Indian film industry goes to prove that the agitation of the Society in the past has had its full effect on the authorities.

The official communique bristles with results achieved by the Society by agitation on different fronts. Reduction of duty on raw films, increase of assessment value and duty on exposed films, abolition of drawback in duty on exposed films, grant of concession in railway fares, revision of censoring methods, supply of statistics to the Society and maintaining statistics of the import of cinema equipments are some of the results achieved by the Motion Picture Society.

But all this is the result of an intensive agitation which was going on prior to two years. For during the last two years, different jealous elements in the Society have been warring with one another with the result that no further useful work or propaganda has been done.

The Motion Picture Society is the only body with a background of experience and achievements to represent thoroughly the motion picture industry in India. All that the Society now needs after the recognition by Government is an annual grant from the Government to defray a part of its expenses for the spread of educational and documentary films.

The annual grant can be justified on the ground that the Motion Picture Society apart from being a body representative of all the different interests in the industry, is primarily an institution for furthering the progress of educational and documentary films in the country. Fashioned after the British Film Institute in its objects and ideals, the Motion Picture Society certainly deserves an annual monetary grant from the Government. Of course, for the correct organization of its affairs, the Society may have to accept a little official supervision, but such supervision, if enforced, is bound to do it more good than bad.

Who could ultimately achieve those objects of the Society as originally planned, but Sir Rahimtullah Chinoy its present President? Sir Rahimtullah happens to be a commercial magnate in the city. To reorganize the Society on new lines, or even to rejuvenate it, will not be a difficult task for him. There is no glory in being a President of an institution which is heavily involved in debts, as the Society is at present. Will Sir Rahimtullah take this work in hand immediately?

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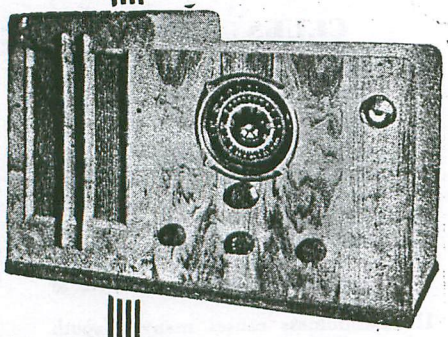

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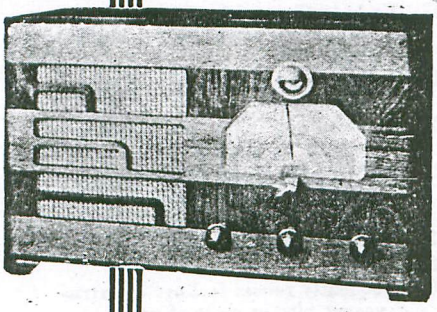

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"COMMONSENSE CROSSWORD" No. 140

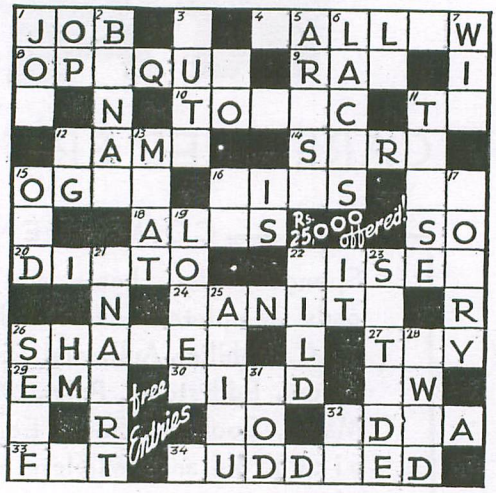
If you had to choose between 12 monthly payments of Rs. 1,350 and a lump sum of Rs. 15,000 which would you prefer? This is not merely a pleasant abstract problem, but one which *you* may actually have to decide very soon if you enter for this Competition. Apart from that covetable alternative First Prize there is a large sum reserved for Runners-up and unlimited attractive Extra Awards for all solvers who commit *four errors or less.* As usual, those who solve the Clues with the greatest care will reap the largest rewards—so do not fail to make full use of the Practice Square below :

CLUES ACROSS

1. Solving the Clues of these puzzles is not a difficult one
4. Of a pale yellowish colour
8. Not transparent
9. Sharp blow
10. A stimulating one often helps to cheer up a person who is depressed
12. Vain and conceited people are apt to take this too seriously
14. Withered
15. To cast amorous glances
16. Sooner or later most philanderers find themselves in difficulties through these
18. In most countries a vast amount of money is recklessly wasted on . . .
20. As before, or in like manner
22. Spell of enforced economy is apt to make many a former spendthrift this
24. Average man's is seldom proof against an attractive woman's wiles
26. Sensitive youngster is much more easily this than one who is self-assured
27. Child's plaything
29. Australian running bird
30. External covering of fruit
32. A notion
33. Such persons are notoriously more often good-natured than otherwise
34. It is apt to upset a wife when her husband is this in presence of strangers

CLOSING DATE FEBRUARY 10th.

N.B.—The Entry Fee in this Competition is Re. 1 per entry and Entry Squares will be published in the issues of January 22nd *and* 29th.



ONLY ENTRY SQUARES CUT OUT FROM

"THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA"

of January 22nd *or* 29th will be accepted

CLUES DOWN

1. Most young mothers find that having a baby to look after is a big this
2. Commonplace
3. Desire to attract attention makes many a spoilt child this in grown-up company
5. To ascend
6. Ornamental fabrics
7. Most Commonsense Crossword solvers are keenly appreciative of this
11. Bashfulness causes many a youth to be this in his manner with young women
13. Flesh of edible animals
15. Middle-aged women who try to make themselves look young sometimes make themselves look this instead
17. To hear that a friend is in trouble usually makes a warm-hearted person this
19. A poor one seldom evokes much sympathy
21. Reversed spelling of word meaning an idler or shirker
22. Such remonstrances seldom have restraining effect on wilful youngster
23. Jumbled spelling of *stayed*
25. Farewell
26. Frequently rouses feelings of extravagant pity in most of us
28. Anything borrowed is, until repaid
31. To bend the head in assent

COPIES AVAILABLE FROM ALL NEWSAGENTS

The EDITOR'S MAIL

Readers "when you are worried" write to me. I will do my best in serving you. Serious matters will be treated seriously, while flippant letters will receive like replies.—The Editor.

From: Bipin B. (Baroda).

I am starting on a foreign tour this year. Will Kananbala accompany me if I pay all her expenses?

Why do you particularly insist on Kanan. She gets plenty of fun and excitement here without having to go to any foreign country. Why, I will accompany you, if you pay for all the expenses. But if you insist on taking a film artiste, then why don't you submit your proposal to Shanta Apte? She has been thinking, loudly enough, of going across and might accept your offer.

From: C. L. Victor Lazarus (Bangalore).

How many Indian film actresses have been to Hollywood?

None so far, but one can never say. So many of them are nowadays threatening to visit Hollywood. I think Hollywood should be warned.

From: R. Ramana Murthy (Vizagapatam).

Why did Nitin Bose introduce only two girls in "Dharatimata"?

Because he hadn't more stuff on hand just then.

Is Pankaj Mullick superior to Saigal in singing?

Yes! Miles superior.

From: S. Kareem (Nellore).

On the screen we see our Anglo-Indian screen girls in saries. Do they wear the same dress in real life?

Yes, sometimes when they go out with the Indian directors. At other times, the sari is an obstacle especially in motor cars.

From: R. Dookie (Durban).

If I become an actor in one of our film companies what shall I do?

Everything else but act. You will begin by dressing well, swank and looking wise. And with this the average career of an actor begins and ends.

From: Nanoobhai B. Patel (Bombay).

I saw the December issue of your paper very carefully but I could not find any advertisement from Prabhat. What has happened to these Prabhat people?

If you miss the Prabhat advertisement in "filmindia", you will find it in another Anglo-Indian film magazine, with a message from Shantaram thrown in for grace. And after all done and said, Prabhat proprietors are producers, and as such they must maintain the traditions of their competitors in the country.

Several people are in the habit of singing film songs in their bath. Why do they do so? Why don't they sing these songs in the open?

If they dare to sing them in the open, our producers would chase them and rush them into their films. Some of these amateurs sing better than our film stars and naturally enough, they must take precautions against our enterprising producers, by straining their vocal muscles in the confines of a bath. There is however another side to this problem. Most of these bathroom singers are nervous people, who unconsciously burst out into a song thinking that they are alone in the world. They hardly have any consideration for those outside.

From: Barindra Krishna (Chupra).

Please let me know why Mr. Shantaram or the authorities concerned at the Prabhat Film Co., do not allow their employees to let the public know their respective salaries?

There is probably not much to know. It is a well known fact that Prabhat does not believe in big salaries as producers in Bombay and in Calcutta do.

From: K. Krishnamurty (Tenali).

My friends tell me that Mr. Shantaram directs all Prabhat pictures but puts other names like Damle, Fatehlal and Kale for a change?

I don't think so, though Mr. Shantaram is reported to be helping his colleagues rather generously. After all Mr. Shantaram is the senior director and if he places his services at the disposal of his other directors to express his sympathy in their work, he is merely improving the pictures of his own company. Several common friends however state that Mr. Shantaram was largely responsible for the unique success of "Tukaram".

What has become of "The Unexpected" which was sent to the International Exhibition in Venice?

The picture was very well received by the judges and even Czechoslovakia offered to buy it, but Prabhat didn't fancy exploiting the foreign field just yet.

Some think that the last portion of "Gopal Krishna" is bad because Mr. Shantaram poked his nose in it?

Even producers have to maintain mythological traditions and they could not avoid the last scene. As regards the other point, Mr. Shantaram would always improve it by his suggestions and not spoil it as some people choose to think.

From: Vipin H. Jhaveri (Surat).

It is said that the intellectual development of a person depends on individual diet. What sort of a diet do our film stars take to develop their intellectual capacity?

Seeing some of our stars and their physical proportions, it is obvious that they have never worried about intellectual attainments. The "diet" which they must be swallowing only seems to add to their weight. At present the only persons who need exercise any intelligence in their work are the publicity men of the studios. They have to add glamour and beauty to the stars—sometimes even sex—justify the criminal waste of money and energy by the directors—and prolong as far as possible the ultimate end of the producer. All this needs intelligence and these publicity boys are kept on real "diet"—starvation diet it is called.

Suppose you are asked to act with Shanta Apte. Will you do so willingly or unwillingly?

Willingly of course! But I am not much good at acting. But this is all a supposition as you have put it, so why worry?

From: H. V. Gowd (Bellary).

Please name some of the prominent Mahomedan actors, actresses, directors and producers.

Actors: Kumar, Nawab and Mazhar Khan

Actresses: Ratan Bai, Khursheed and Anwari

Directors: S. Fatehlal, Mehboob and Kardar

Producers: M. and Y. A. Fazalbhoy of General Films Ltd.

From: A. V. Ramakrishna Rao (Tumkur).

I want you to recommend me a couple of books on Cine Photography and where I could get them?

"Handbook for Motion Picture Photographers", by H. C. McKay and "Film" by Sieveking & Morrow are two useful books for the students. You can order them through the New Book Company, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay.

From: M. S. Ramachandran (Madras).

Why are you not publishing photos from the new productions of Prabhat?

Where are the productions and where are the photos? You shall have to wait a bit longer.

Which is the better picture—Manzil or Mukti?

I liked "Manzil" better. Didn't you?

From: Krishna Rao Kisri (Cocanada).

Can you tell me something about Trilok Kapur? How has he done in the "Secretary"?

He is the younger brother of the famous actor Prithviraj Kapur. Trilok shows signs of becoming a really useful artiste. He is enthusiastic and modest and is willing to learn. Quite a good boy, he will someday be a top liner if he remains a modest devotee of art. His work in the "Secretary" was good and enterprising.

From: Govind (Bangalore).

How is that no pictures have been produced on incidents in our two epics—the Mahabharata and the Ramayana?

Where have you been all these days? Not only have our producers produced every incident from these two epics but they have added some more and thus improved on the works of Vyas and Valmiki. Seeing some of these additions, one wonders why the spirits of these two poets did not strike down the offending producers. Perhaps they thought, like me, that things would never improve. Poor poets!

From: T. M. Hamsa (Madras).

Who stands foremost among the cinema critics of India?

This is an important question and you should answer it as a reader. In fact, all readers should answer it. Why don't you all answer it—mind you, truthfully and frankly? I invite all my readers to drop me a postcard with their opinion. about the best critic in our film industry.

From: Shyam Sunder Bhatnagar (Santa Cruz).

How would you like if "Gandhiji" were to act as "Villain" in a national picture called "India Struggles" along with "Miss Mayo" as the heroine, "Neville Chamberlain" as the hero, Bank of England to finance and "Jawaharlal Nehru" to direct?

What about Mahomedally Jinnah acting the blind singer?

From: A. Purshottama Rao (Ponnur).

Compare Shanta Hublikar with Shanta Apte in points of singing and acting?

Is a comparison necessary, now that the famous Prabhat director Shantaram has chosen Shanta Hublikar to star in his new picture? Both the girls are in the permanent employment of Prabhat and who could assess their talents better than Shantaram? Surely Shantaram would not take a lesser artiste for his picture when a suitable one is available. Shantaram's decision to take up Shanta Hublikar should be a pointer for your judgment. Besides, with Prabhat correct casting is more important than mere star value. Probably Shanta Apte did not have a suitable role.

From: Ghafoor Ahmed (Banda).

I want to know something about Wadia Movietone?

There is not much to know in this company. They produce pictures which in utter modesty they label as "stunt" pictures. Even Nadia getting down a staircase is expected to be taken as a "stunt". See the "Flying Ranee" and you will know both the past and the future of Wadia's.

From: B. K. Chaudhury (Cawnpore).

Which of the following pictures contributed towards film technique and art this year: "Dharatimata", "My Son", "Adhikar", "Jailor", "Baghban", "Industrial India", "Asha", "Poornima", "Brahmachari" and "We Three".

"Adhikar" proved a high water mark in film craft. "Brahmachari" proved that film comedies if correctly produced could be big successes. "Dharati Mata" pointed out that even classic subjects could be considered for film production. "Baghban" proved by its huge success, that luck plays a great part in film production. "Jailor" provided Sohrab Mody with an excuse to tour the Punjab. "Industrial India" provoked the thought that film producers can think of moulding public opinion to develop our industries. "Asha" provided an object lesson to those who have money but lack experience in production. "Poornima" proved that dogs and horses were not absolutely necessary to make a picture a success. "My Son" brought home the fact to us that even Prabhat can sometimes produce weak pictures.

A Lahore magazine called "Adhikar" 'good', and "Jailor" 'very good', while you call "Adhikar" very good. How do you explain this?

What do you think of it yourself? If you think "Adhikar" to be very good, you have only to follow "filmindia" for your future guidance. Don't believe these Lahore papers—they are sentimental and affectionate. When they praise they believe in extremes. Sohrab Mody must have been 'very good' to the man who called "Jailor" 'very good'. There is another way of being 'very good'. It begins with a two page advertisement.

From: C. S. Reddy (Kurnool).

Who is Leela Chitnis and what is her screen career?

Leela Chitnis is a young Bene-Israel girl. Till a year back she was a married woman with children. The children she has still got, but the husband is divorced. She is one of our few good

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artistes and has worked in several pictures, prominent being "Beyond the Horizon" and "Gentleman Daku". She will soon be seen in "Sant Tulsidas" produced by Ranjit Movietone.

From: S. M. Syed Ahmed (Galle—Ceylon).

Who are the proprietors—of Ruby Pictures?

It is a partnership concern between Miss Ruby Myers (Sulochana) and Mr. D. Billimoria.

What about East India Film Coy?

What about them? They probably discovered that picture production did not suit their temperament.

From: P. M. Maya (Cochin).

Do Shanta Apte and Sabita Devi subscribe to "filmindia"?

I know, rather we all know, that they do not fail to read it. Why should they subscribe when over a thousand bookstalls all over India sell the paper and they can always buy it on the quiet without my knowing it. The trouble however is that they don't keep quiet after reading.

From: V. Hanumantha Rao (Rajahmundry).

Who is the better artiste: Shanta Apte or Devika Rani?

Devika Rani.

From: Manick Lall Ghose (Calcutta).

Whom do you think to be the better dancer between Lila Desai and Sadhona Bose?

Sadhona Bose.

From: Chiman N. (Surat).

Why does the Ranjit studio produce a lot of pictures?

To maintain a large staff and to feed a large number of theatres. The Ranjit studio has a greater national importance to our country and industry owing to its big annual production programme than those studios who produce only a few pictures a year under the guise of quality.

From: L. S. Kumar (Nagpur).

Who is the best character actor on the Indian screen?

Mr. Baburao Pendharkar.

From: R. P. Mehotra (Cawnpore).

Mira Devi of "Vachan" seems to be a promising lady?

Promising? Yes! But only promising!

From: S. L. N. Murty (Karimnagar).

Two days back I had the..... of seeing Prabhat's "The Unexpected", the so much exaggerated film. I do not somehow or other, find it at all to be a nice picture. What do you say for it?

Opinions differ and one has every right to entertain his own. I liked "The Unexpected" for several reasons. Vide my review in October 1937 issue, if you have the copy.

From: K. L. Narasimha Rao (Masulipatam).

Does Meenakshi of "Brahmachari" fame excel Kanan of "Vidyapati" in acting?

No.

From: J. R. Mantha (Parvatipur).

Are cinema actresses advocates of birth-control?

I think they favour the other productions. With the film industry in such a precarious financial position how can the poor actresses indulge in the luxury of a motherhood. And yet several of them are happy mummies.

From: W. C. Varma (Benares).

I want the photos of Leela Desai, Mollina, Greta Garbo, Kanan and all other girls of the screen. Will you send them to me?

What do you take me for, a frame maker or match maker? Write to the girls directly.

From: P. H. Basava Raju (Bangalore).

What is your object in publishing "Kicks & Kisses" in "filmindia"?

I get both in the industry. The surplus I pass on to my readers. I hope you don't mind.

From: V. Narayan (Madras).

Can you define "film tecnic"?

I shall try to when you learn to spell it.

What was Phani Mazumdar before he directed "Street Singer"?

An assistant director under Mr. P. C. Barua.

From: V. Ramadurai (Erode).

May I know why Sabita Devi and Director Badami left Sagar?

We shall soon know why? Have a little patience.

Will Mr. Saigal give me an interview if I go over to Calcutta?

Oh yes! He will even receive you at the station. But I wonder what Mr. Saigal will talk to you!

From: K. Gopalkrishnan (Vellore).

How many graduates are there among the Indian screen actresses?

If you mean the University product, there are two registered ones. Mrs. Enakshi Ramrao and Miss Nalini Turkhud.

Who is the actress on the cover of your December issue?

Sunita Devi of Ranjit Movietone.

Some interesting shots from "It's True" a social picture produced by Saraswati Cinetone of Poona.

ɔtos from "Ratna Lutari" (Lady Cavalier) a ·han picture directed by Mr. A. M. Khan with Romilla in the lead.

Notes and News—

RANJIT & ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Ranjit Movietone who usually produce the largest number of pictures in a single year, have secured the release right for a period of one year at the Royal Opera House. This popular theatre will of course remain under the management of Ideal Pictures Ltd., but the programmes will be arranged by the Ranjit Movietone. This brings two theatres in the city under the Ranjit control. "Sant Tulsidas" will be the first Ranjit picture to grace the Royal Opera House.

FILM PRODUCERS AND THE COMMERCE MEMBER

On the 10th January a deputation of the leading film producers of the city led by Sir Rahimtullah Chinoy, the President of the Motion Picture Society of India waited on the Hon. Sir Mahomed Zafarullah Khan, the Commerce Member of the Government of India, during his short visit to the city.

Consequent upon the lead given by "filmindia" with regard to the huge profits made by the distributors of the foreign films, the deputation pointed out to the Hon. Commerce Member that over 55 lakhs of rupees a year were sent out as nett profits to foreign producers. The Hon. Commerce Member was urged upon to increase the assessment value of the exposed films coming into the country and raise the import duty thereon suitably when the Ottawa Agreement terminates in the near future, while maintaining the present duty on the raw films.

The deputationists further stressed the necessity of establishing a Central Body to guide and advise the Indian film industry in the same way as the British Film Institute in England or the Federal Department of Visual Instruction in Germany.

FILM STARS BOYCOTT GERMANY ?

"A declaration of Independence" calling upon President Roosevelt to sever economic relations with Germany, has been drawn up by a group of prominent film stars and motion picture executives.

Some of the prominent signatories are: Edward G. Robinson, Fred Astaire, Bob Montgomery, Miriam Hopkins, Joan Bennett, Claudette Colbert, Paul Muni, G. Marx, Ginger Rogers and Bette Davis.

Copies of the declaration will be presented to the theatre-goers for endorsement and it is hoped to obtain 30,000,000 signatories in support.

That will be something for Hitler to think of.

UNITY IS STRENGTH !

Paris Cinema owners recently expressed their dislike for new taxation on them by the authorities by closing down all the cinemas for three days. The new taxation which was proposed to be imposed on them would have necessitated their increasing the prices of the seats by 50%. The cinema owners refused to penalise the public thus.

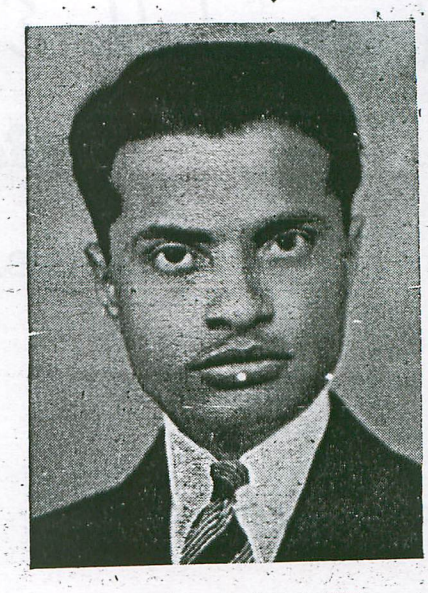
For three continuous days Paris the city of lights and pleasure had all the picture houses closed.

The Deputy Premier, M. Chautemps agreed to the new tax being suspended pending an inquiry into the grievances provided the cinema owners agreed to re-open immediately. But the cinema-owners had no use for compromises.

AMERICANS FINANCE THE BRITISH !

20th Century-Fox the American firm will invest £1,000,000 in a production programme at the Gainsborough studios at Islington. This means that the future Gainsborough productions will be financed by the American firm. In this connection, it is significant to recall that early last year Gaumont-British closed down their £300,000 studios at Shepherd's Bush.

Now the problem of financing Gaumont-British and Gainsborough is automatically solved.



NOW NO VACANCY!

Mr. Baburao Pai for years associated with the remarkable success of Prabhat pictures has now accepted a fifth partnership in the Prabhat Film Company of Poona. Mr. Pai being of course the most enterprising among the partners of Prabhat, we expect that studio to give us more and better pictures in future.

Production will continue under the control of Maurice Ostrer and Edward Black, with Robert T. Kane of 20th Century-Fox working in liaison.

In India also, we are threatened with an early invasion from the foreigners.

BOYS MUST NOT SEE CRIME PICTURES

On account of the serious increase of juvenile crime in the district, Sittingbourne and Milton Council have decided to ban the showing of horrific films to children under the age of 16.

Mr. A. J. Bedelle, the Chairman of the Council said that the boys brought before the magistrates for shop breaking had not only copied film gangsters but improved on their methods.

The British Board of Film Censors at the suggestion of the London County Council classified these films as "H" to provide guidance to the exhibitors.

What about the crime pictures coming to India with a tragic re-

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28 NOV 1938

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Dear Sirs,

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gularity? Can't the Censors do anything about it?

SAGAR PICTURES IN "PATHE"

Right in the wake of Ranjit Movietone securing the release monopoly at the Royal Opera House, Sagar Movietone, rather Mr. Surendra C. Desai, the eldest son of Mr. Chimanlal Desai, the proprietor of Sagar, has secured the "Pathe", which is perhaps the most popular and well equipped cinema on the Lamington Road and in the heart of the city, for the first release of all Sagar pictures. With producers having more and more direct control over our cinemas, the exhibition side of the film industry will in future be considerably influenced by the production interests. In a way, this is good, as producers will realize from their own experience the causes of the precarious existence of several of our exhibitors and will not insist on the pernicious practice of asking minimum guarantees for pictures which are no better than badly made sausages.

The cinemas in the city are at present controlled as follows: Central Talkies (Prabhat), Minerva (New Theatres) West End and Royal Opera House (Ranjit), Pathe (Sagar) Lamington (Wadia) and the Krishna, the Imperial, the Super and the Majestic for small producers,—4 first run houses for over 12 small and independent producers.

MR. A. NARAYANAN HITS OUT !

Speaking as the President of the Third Madras Provincial Film Conference held on the 22nd December 1938 at Madras, Mr. A. Narayanan said: "It is a pity that when less important industries have officially recognised councils and associations to voice their grievances and further their interests, an important growing national industry like the cinema in which crores of rupees have been invested which affects the outlook of life of crores of people and with its great future potentialities should be without an officially recognised central organization."

Tracing the history of the South Indian film industry Mr. Narayanan said: "A limited market heavier initial investment, without corresponding increase in the field of exhibition, a greater supply of pictures than what the market could hold and less of thought for the production of pictures that will sustain audience interest by a varied, novel treatment of subjects with timely topical appeal and a complete lack of general improvement in technique, have brought the film industry in South India at the end of 1938 to a state of which we could not be proud."

Khan Bahadur Gulam Hoosein Dossani, the senior partner of Dossani Film Corporation is the first Khoja gentleman of Calcutta to be honoured with the title of the Khan Bahadur.

UNJUSTIFIABLE DISCRIMINATION !

Condemning the discrimination shown by the Government and the public utility concerns, Mr. Narayanan said "The help we are getting from our government (in these days of subsidized industries in other countries) for which we are paying by way of income-tax and the other usual taxes and customs duty on imported raw films and recording and reproducing equipments to the tune of lakhs of rupees and for all this the cinema industry does not get a return of even one pie's worth of service, is the continued imposition of the entertainment tax first imposed as a temporary war-time measure. **In principle no more unjust or inequitable tax could be found than this tax based on income and not on profits.**

"The latest addition is the imposition of a tax on bills and hoardings by the municipalities that has definitely throttled not only the film industry, but also the stage, throwing the stage workers on the streets and adversely many other allied industries like printing etc.

"It is unfortunate that the cinema industry alone should be singled out for special discriminatory charging.

"The same is the case with the Railways with their discrimination in rates for film parcels and their withholding the concessions for film producing units, while granting such concessions to others, and the electric supply companies with their unequal rates for the supply of energy for the cinema companies as compared with their rates for a few of the major industries."

Every word of Mr. Narayanan is unfortunately too true but does he forget that the ascetic popular ministers with their peculiar "Gandhian Hue" are not so fond of the Indian film industry?

The Hon. Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, the Premier of Madras, would do well to study the Presidential address of Mr. A. Narayanan during his spare time. And so should the other ministers in other provinces, because grievances of our film industry elsewhere are identically the same.

WE MOURN WITH DISNEY !

Walt Disney the famous screen cartoonist is in mourning. On December 12, Disney's 80 year old father and 71 year old mother were found dead in their Hollywood home, poisoned by coal gas from a furnace.

Disney adored his parents and only two years back he presented them their new house next to his own. India sympathises with this great artist in his grief.

Mr. Chhotubhai Desai goes to Delhi as the manager of the new booking office of Paramount Film Company of Bombay.

THE CHEEKY ANGLO-INDIANS !

The 1st Class Magistrate of Bilaspur has convicted five Anglo-Indians and sentenced them to pay fines ranging from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 75/-. They were charged with committing a riot in the Nadam Cinema Talkie House and preventing an Indian gentleman, Mr. D. P. Ray, Pleader, from occupying a seat in the cinema house.

An instance of class hatred, perhaps ?

FILM INDUSTRY AS THE 8TH KEY INDUSTRY

The members of the National Planning Committee were entertained to tea on the 19th December by the leading members of the Indian Motion Picture Congress.

Several aspects of the film industry and the role the films would play in the scheme of industrialization of the country, provided proper support was forthcoming from the different Provincial Governments, were discussed at the gathering.

The attention of the National Planning Committee was drawn to the fact that the Indian film industry ranked eighth in importance as a key industry.

DAYLIGHT SCREEN

Dr. Takeo Shimizu of the Scientific and Chemical Institute of Tokyo has invented a new daylight screen which enables pictures to be shown in lighted rooms or in broad daylight after six years of intensive research. The screen is made of celluloid.

The first public projection on this new screen proved a splendid success and the new invention will soon be manufactured on commercial basis.

What a boon to the Educational authorities and to those who clamour for open air cinemas!

HONOURED AT THE TAJ

On the 20th January, Mr. Jagannath J. Patel, "Bauer" representative for India gave a grand luncheon at the Taj in honour of Mr. Baburao Pai, the new partner of the Prabhat Film Co. Sardar Chandulal Shah, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Indian Motion Picture Congress presided. All the producers, journalists and film celebrities were present for the occasion.

GUNGA DIN STOP PRESS

Ram Bagai, "filmindia's" Hollywood Correspondent cables:—

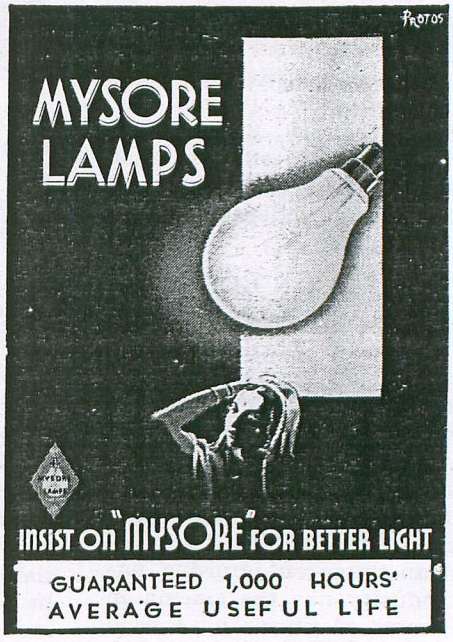
"Your correspondent was the only one invited for a sneak preview of R.K.O.'s film "Gungadin". It may be good entertainment for the rest of the world but for India, it resembles the usual Occidental idea of India—seen through the eyes of British Imperialism."

MR. BILLIMORIA'S FATHER

Mr. M. B. Billimoria's revered father Mr. Burjorji Nusserwanji Mengushi, a retired contractor and journalist died at Billimoria on the 19th January at the age of 73. Our condolences to Mr. M. B. Billimoria.

HER TRAGIC PART

Hardly a year has passed after the unfortunate death of her husband, cruel fate has again dealt another blow to Mrs. Durga Khote. Her father Mr. Pandurang S. Laud passed away on the 9th January 1939 at the age of 69. Mr. Laud was an eminent solicitor and left behind one son and three daughters to mourn his death. Our sympathies go with Mrs. Laud and her family. Durga Bai is the youngest daughter in the family.



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KHURSHEED—

As a gipsy girl in "Sitara" an Everest production, Khursheed sings and dances with an abandon that will take the fans off their feet. Mr. Ezra Mir who directs the picture thinks "Sitara" to be the best hit of his career.

"Gunga Din" Another Scanda

Indians Portrayed as

American Ingenuity Provides an

Indians No Better than Dogs?

By KHWAJA AHMAD ABBAS

(Specially written for "filmindia")

(This famous film critic of "The Bombay Chronicle" writes this article after obtaining first hand knowledge of the subject during his recent visit to Hollywood. Having had the chance of perusing carefully the actual shooting script of "Gunga Din", no one would be better qualified to write on the subject than Mr. Abbas).—(The Editor).

It began with "India Speaks." Then came, in quick succession, "Lives of a Bengal Lancer", "Clive of India", "Wee Willie Winkie", "Tiger of Eschnapur" and only too recently, "The Drum", the Alexander Korda film which was banned in several Indian provinces and raised a storm of protest all over India due to the excellent lead given by "filmindia." But in none of these films has our country been libelled so grotesquely as in "Gunga Din", the R.K.O. Radio picture which is shortly to be released. It is an Imperialist propaganda of the crudest, the most vulgar sort and depicts Indians as nothing better than sadistic barbarians. It will make the stomach of every Indian—and every fair-minded foreigner—turn with disgust. Some of the scenes in it are revolting, nauseating.

I am in a position to say this because I have read the script of this infamous photoplay, visited the studio where it is being made, saw work in progress on the "sets" for this film. The memory of my brief stay in Hollywood where I made many friends and received courteous treatment at many studios including the R.K.O. Radio studios will for ever be embittered by the thought that in that beautiful sunny city they are producing such an atrocious libel on my country and my people.

INDIANS—NO BETTER THAN DOGS !

Who and what was "Gunga Din" that he should be "immortalized" by this picture? Those who are familiar with the works of that greatest of all Imperialist propagandist poets, Rudyard Kipling, will recall a poem by this name.

It is not a long poem and tells the simple story of "Gunga Din", a regimental water-carrier on the North Western Frontier, who dies in an attempt to save the lives of British soldiers who are being attacked by marauding Pathans. The purpose is obvious: to impress the world with the devotion of Indians and to teach the "natives" that the highest ambition in their lives must be such an opportunity to serve their White masters. When Gunga Din dies, Kipling makes one of the Tommies say, "Gunga Din, he was a better man than I am." That one sentence, I am sure, will be exploited to prove that the motive of the story is not anti-Indian.

But the sacrifice of Gunga Din, as sublimated by Kipling, was not the sacrifice of a friend, an equal, but that of a faithful servant. He served his masters with dog-like devotion and if a dog dies in such circumstances the noble master may be moved to utter these words of patronizing gratitude, "Oh, Jack, you may have been a dog, but you were a better being than us"! Those who have read Kipling and his works know the exact status which the Indian characters enjoy in his stories and poems and "Gungadin" is certainly no exception.

Mr. K. A. Abbas.

When Kipling wrote that poem he had not heard of Hollywood. Therefore, while he turned out an excellent piece of imperialist propaganda, he forgot to include in the poem sufficient elements of romance, sex-appeal, etc., without which one cannot produce a box-office hit. But Hollywood scenarists are the most resourceful literary carpenters in the world. If it came to it they could produce a screen adaptation of Karl Marx's "Das Kapital" complete with Irving Berlin's "scintilating songs" and a couple of Ginger Rogers-cum-Fred

dalously Anti—Indian Picture !

Sadistic Barbarians !

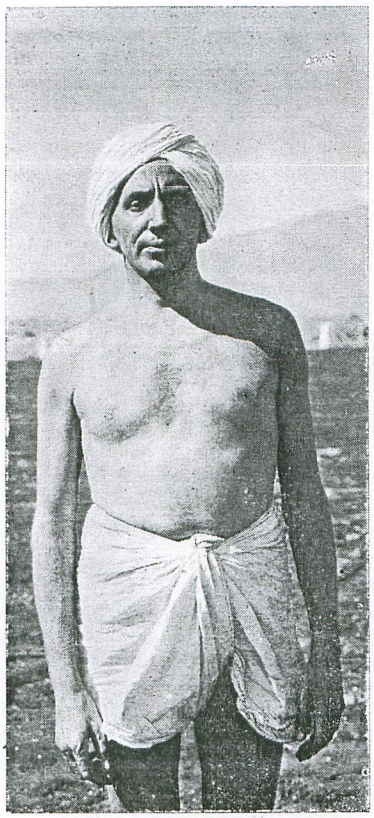
Apology for British Imperialism.

Astaire "streamlined dances" thrown in. They have been known to have bought a novel of Upton Sinclair exposing the capitalist society and turned it into a gangster "thriller." To import into "Gunga Din" the stock situations of regimental romance, Hollywood version of British-Tommy humour, "thrilling" fight scenes and pseudo-Oriental hocus pocus was like child's play to them. They have done it, true to type, and the result is the R.K.O. Radio version of "Gunga Din."

INDIANS CRINGING BEFORE THE WHITE MASTERS

Somewhere in the archives of Hollywood I suspect there is a sacred formula which must be followed every time they decide to produce a film about India. Take any of these films — "Wee Willie Winkie", "Lives of a Bengal Lancer" or "The Drum",— and you find the unvarying pattern. "Gunga Din" scrupulously follows the same tradition. A British regiment is stationed "somewhere on the tumultuous Indian North West Frontier." The same old jokes are exchanged between the Tommies (Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, Jnr., Victor Maclaeglen), the smart subaltern inevitably falls in love with his superior's daughter, the regimental dance is held under the "languorous" Oriental moon and is followed, in due course, by fighting between the Pathans and the British in which God, justice and fairplay are all on the British side while the Pathans (called "Thugs" in this picture!) are all, of course, a gang of unscrupulous cut-throats!

The white "hero" is kidnapped by fanatic "native" priests and is kept in a torture chamber with poisonous cobras wriggling uncomfortably near. But, of course, he won't yield to the threats of the "cursed infidels" and is ultimately rescued, the mutinous pathans routed and the might of the British Empire once again vindicated.



A "Hindu" (In America every Indian is taken for a Hindu) in "Gunga Din". This specimen is supposed to belong to the Frontier Provinces.

All the British characters are honest, jolly souls while all the "natives" are scheming, treacherous, unscrupulous devils. All but one!! The solitary exception is Gunga Din, the faithful water-carrier—loyal unto death, despite the insults and curses that are invariably showered on him by his White Masters. He is always cringing before them. **The word "cringing" occurs innumerable times in the scenario, for that is Gunga Din's consistent pattern of behaviour.** That is how all loyal "natives" must behave in the presence of their rulers!

HORRORS OF THE WEST PLANTED ON THE EAST

While on a visit to the R.K.O. Radio studios in Hollywood the courteous Publicity Department flooded me with all the details of their plans for "Gunga Din." Shooting was going on at that time on an outdoor location, three hundred miles away near Mount Whitney in the Death Valley. I was told that out there in the Californian desert no less than 250 carpenters had built a huge 10,000 dollars set comprising of a regular British fort, Indian town, temple etc.

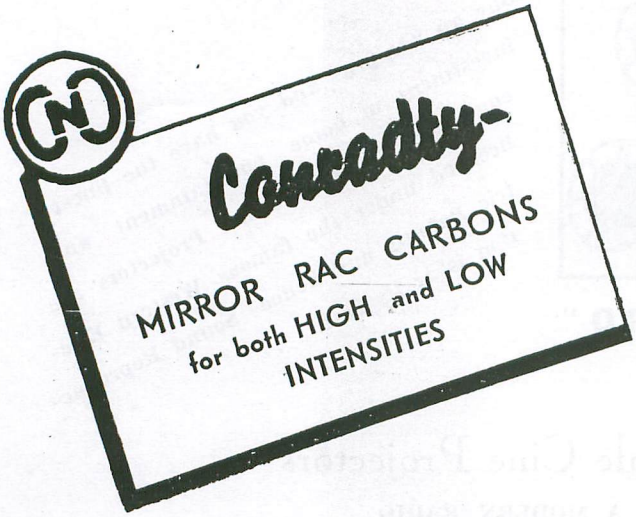
Thousands of extras were employed, six or seven elephants were used to forge the "Indian atmosphere", exposed film was sent by air daily to Hollywood and, after processing, sent back to be screened on location at an open-air theatre. I was naturally impressed. Then I was taken to the sound-stages to see some of the sets that were being got ready for indoor shooting. The first was a temple, a fairly passable imitation of Elephanta caves—supposed to be in the frontier!! The next was the torture chamber. The Government of India communique on the frontier "operations" never leave out any juicy detail of the heroic deeds of the British soldiers but I have yet to come across any instance in

(Continued on page 31)

CHANDANI—

This new find of Saraswati will soon grace the screen in "It's True" their social picture directed by Mr. Chowdhary. "It's True" is coming to the screen at the Central Talkies, Bombay.

CONRADTY CINEMA CARBONS



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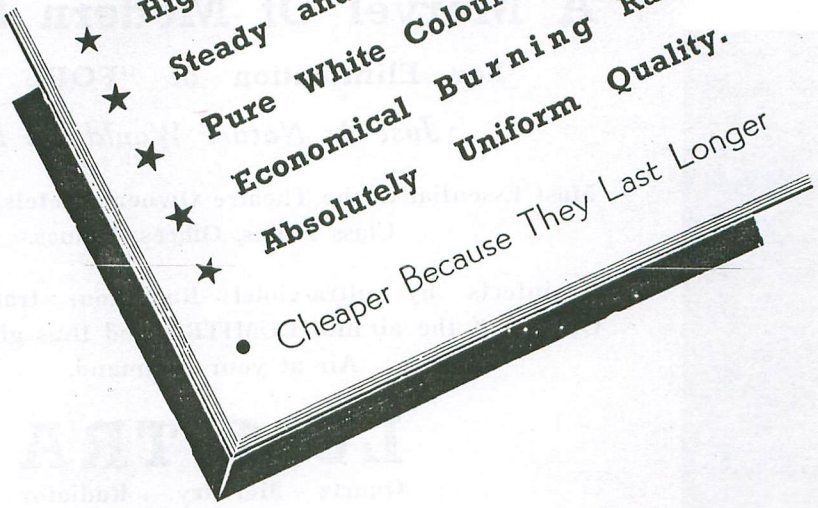
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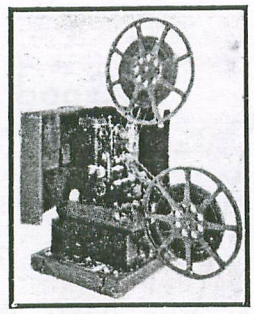

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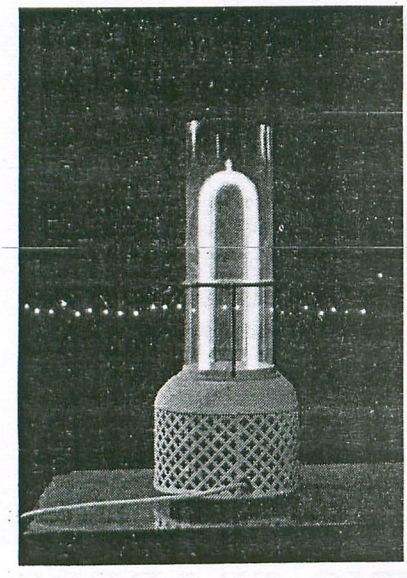

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(Continued from page 27)

which they have been tortured by the Pathans in a dungeon full of snakes.

I don't think a torture chamber like the one is shown in "Gunga Din" exists anywhere in the frontier. The only place I saw anything like it was in the "Chamber of Horrors" at Madame Tussaud's in London where all the instruments of torture perfected by **civilized Europe** are displayed !

RIDICULE OF THE GODDESS KALI

Fed on books like Katherine Mayo's "Mother India" and films like "India Speaks" the average American has rather a cockeyed notion of India and Indians. The scenarists who wrote "Gunga Din" seem to have heard of Pathans, of Kali, of idols and priests and temples, of elephants, of loin-cloth and of upright British soldiers. And in "Gunga Din" they have put them all together in a most amazing jumble. Kali-worship goes on in the land of Muslim Pathans, people in the frontier are shown wearing loin cloth (instead of the **"Shalwar"**, which every one, Hindu or Muslim, wears over there), elephants tread the camel tracks of the Khyber Pass. It is all like producing a film of Hollywood life and showing glamour girls riding on the back of Alaskan bears and cigar-chewing producers going about with feathers stuck in their hair like the Red Indians !

I was so amazed by these hopeless incongruities that I wanted to know who was the technical adviser. In and around Hollywood there live quite a number of Indians (Hindus, as they are invariably called in America) including professors, students and other cultured people who could surely tell the producers of "Gunga Din" a thing or two about India. But, imagine my surprise, when I discovered that the Technical Adviser for this picture is a seventy-year old retired British Officer, Sir Robert Erskine Holland whose chief qualifications for being an expert on Indian culture and customs is that he was for a long time a member of the high-born services in India, one of our rulers, who after a whole life spent in India, cannot speak two words of Hindusthani correctly and don't know the difference between a **"chapati"** and a **"chaprasi"**. I was curious to find how they came to select this great "authority" on India and was told that he had been sent by the British Embassy in Washington. Later on I was informed that whenever a Hollywood producer undertakes a film about India, the British Embassy is asked to supply an "expert." The tentacles of Imperialist propaganda are far-reaching !

India Exposed to the Ridicule of the White World

Such is the film that will shortly be released from Hollywood. And yet one more outrageous libel on India will be flashed on the screen in every country of the world. It is not enough even if we manage to get the film banned in India. In my recent wanderings all over the world, I was haunted by the "Drum" and "The Tiger of Eschnapur" wherever I went. From New York to Budapest these films chased me from town to town. What must they think of me, I often wondered when I met foreigners, after seeing such films about my country? No longer was I surprised that we are always looked down upon in alien lands. To the foreigners I appeared perhaps either as an unscrupulous black-hearted devil lke those shown in "The Drum" or a **cringing** barbarian like Gunga Din.

"Don't such films make your stomach turn?", a fair-minded English Film critic asked me in London, referring to "The Drum." And when I assured him they did, he added, "Then what are you going to do about it?"

Now that "The Drum" is shortly to be followed by "Gunga Din", I repeat the question **"What are we going to do about it?"**

AN EXTRACT FROM THE ORIGINAL STUDIO NEWS FROM HOLLYWOOD.

GUNGA DIN

Nick Ermolieff
Foreign Department
RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.
Hollywood, Calif.

by
Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur
Joel Sayre and Fred Guiol

THEME: WHEN A REVIVAL OF THUGGEE, ANCIENT MURDER - RELIGION, THREATENS BRITAIN'S TROUBLED NORTHWEST INDIAN FRONTIER, THE THREE TOUGHEST SERGEANTS IN THE BRITISH INDIAN ARMY ARE SENT TO THE SCENE, ONE, TREASURE-BOUND, DRAGS THE OTHER TWO INTO TROUBLE AND THE THREE SERGEANTS AND THEIR NATIVE WATER CARRIER, GUNGA DIN, ARE CAPTURED BY THUGS. A RESCUE BATTALION HEADS DIRECTLY INTO A THUG AMBUSH BUT IS WARNED JUST IN TIME BY GUNGA DIN AT THE COST OF HIS LIFE. HIS HEROISM AVERTS THE AMBUSH, THE SERGEANTS ARE RESCUED AND THE UPRISING IS STAMPED OUT.

It speaks for itself. "Indians" means "Thugs" who believe in murder as Religion.

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Featuring:

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BHEDI KUMAR

Director: **Chunilal Parekh**

Featuring:

Miss Indurani, Yashvant Dave, Urmila Devi, Baby Indira, Shirazi A. M., Rafik, Ansari, Mishra, Sadik, Vasant Pahelwan and others.

(1) KUL DIPAK
(2) JUNGLE KA JAVAN
(3) CHABUK WALI
(4) VEER BALA
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(6) CYCLE WALI

RAN SANGRAM

Director: **A. M. Khan**

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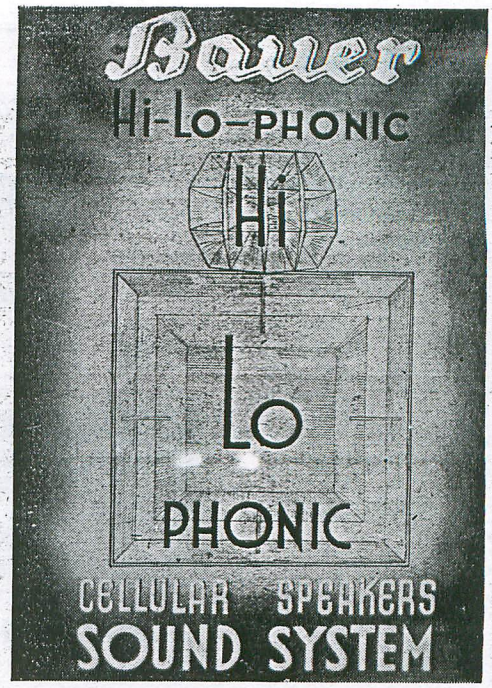

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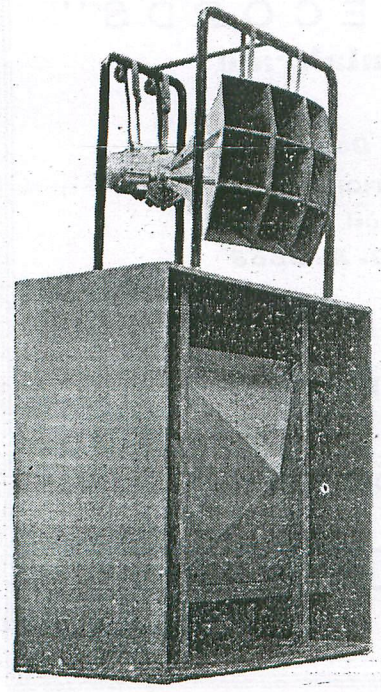

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"I REGRET TO SAY"

BY D. F. KARAKA

[Mr. D. F. Karaka is the wellknown writer whose book "I Go West" attracted so much attention in India and abroad. Mr. Karaka has taken journalism as a career and has been doing plenty of writing. His article on "Adhikar" is as annoying as some of his other articles on other subjects and that is why we are publishing it. But Mr. Karaka will need plenty of luck to get away with this one. We are sure, Bengal will not swallow what Mr. Karaka has written, so easily.—The Editor.]

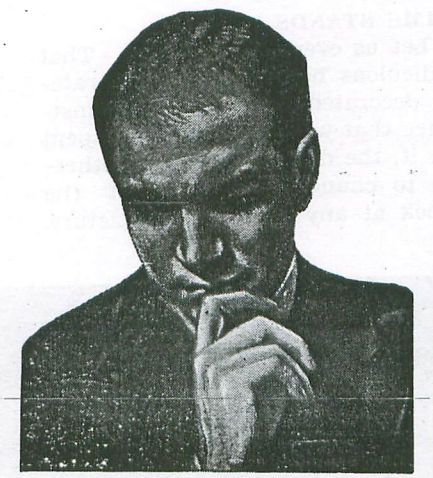
Last week I saw "Adhikar". It is the second Indian picture I have ever seen. I remember many years ago going to a picture house somewhere on the Girgaum Road to see one of the early Indian pictures which dealt with social life of the sophisticated type such as one would expect to form the plot of a Herbert Marshall Hollywood picture. It was called "The Vamp."

I have seen, during the last ten years nearly every picture that has come out of any of the big houses of Hollywood and England and which can reasonably be said to be worth seeing. I have a taste which varies from the Garbo to the brothers Marx. I have known a number of people connected with the film industry from cameramen to directors. And more than anything else I have read Lejune ever since I first laid hands on her articles which appear regularly in the "Sunday Observer". So that when I see a picture, I feel that I get more out of it than the average picture-goer. All this may sound very bumptious, and certainly not very modest. But I have dealt long enough with film people to know that one must speak for oneself. No one else will ever speak for you.

"Adhikar" is a picture which attempts to portray sophisticated life. It is an interesting coincidence that after all these years the Indian film industry has only gone from "The Vamp" to "Adhikar". I do not think that anything could ever move slower in the history of progress. "Adhikar" was picked out for me as being representative of the type of production which is turned out of one of the leading Indian film studios of the moment and as the New Theatres Studios answer to the description of being in the front line of Indian production "Adhikar" was obviously the picture to see.

CUT OFF 9000 FEET TO MAKE IT A PICTURE

My predominant impression at seeing this picture was that with certain definite changes this could turn out to be a reasonably interesting film to which one could go to while away a few hours in the evening. The reservations are these. I would first of all cut some nine thousand feet of that picture and put that roll of celluloid where it belongs—in the basket for collecting waste-paper. I would give the man or men who were responsible for its direction a handbook on the elements of direction, followed by a course of training in the smallest of the English or American studios and make him push a camera behind a von Sternberg or a Capra before I put him on to direct a picture of that type and of that exhorbitant proportions. I would also change a number of people in the cast. The first person who would go would be the comedian, whose acting was beyond doubt the most feeble attempt at comedy that I have seen in many years. I would employ what is known elsewhere as "the continuity girl" and would get someone with some conception of time and date and season to write the script. When these changes are made I would put "Adhikar" on the Indian screen, but not before.



Mr. D. F. Karaka

It is not my purpose to belittle the early efforts of a growing film industry. I know it is very easy to criticise and to destroy. I do not want to do either. I want rather to open the eyes of those in whose hands the destiny of the film industry lies to the wastage of time and money when they could do so much better towards building up an industry which has in my opinion a great future. Only when I see how these efforts are directed in the wrong direction and in the treatment of subjects wholly unsuited to them, that I feel something must be done to stop this cruel wastage of the energy of a whole nation which in some form or the other is used up by the film industry. It is not only the directors and the managers who form the film industry, but all the lesser men as well, all the artistes and the stand-in's and, above all that vast public which puts hands in its pockets and touches gold.

ONE LONG WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY!

"Adhikar" struck me as one long waste of time and money. I say this with some reason. The subject of the picture, translated into one word in English means "Right". It has its setting in one of those imitations of the ultra-modern

richman's home with elaborate sets and vast underground apartments and chromium plating and all that goes with it. It has a moral which it tries to force somewhat artificially out of the story. It says or tries to say that there is no contentment in riches and as a side moral that the poor are really happy in spite of all the misery that you see portrayed. There are some glaring defects in this conglomeration of disjointed ideas, morals, and settings. In the first place you are intensely conscious of the fact that neither the director nor the actors nor any one else responsible for the picture believe in one word they say. It is not convincing. And when morals which are preached do not convince those to whom they are addressed, it is only natural that the picture should fail in what is its main purpose.

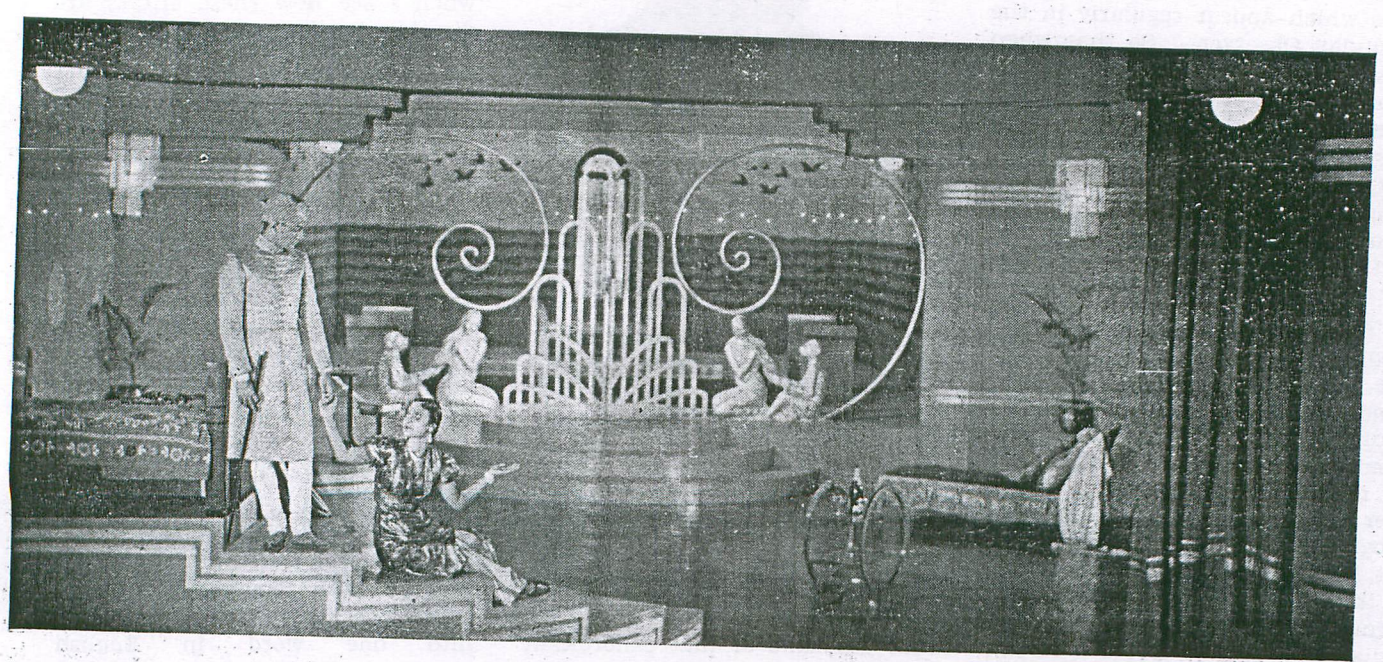
India is not and never will be sophisticated in that sense of the word in which we know it in Europe and America. There is not the urge nor the education to be sophisticated. When you grant that, you must also grant that a picture that is made in India against all the environment, upbringing, culture and the life of the Indian people can never be, whatever its quality, a picture of any distinction in this country. The theme of the picture is enough to condemn it in India.

Social life of the type portrayed in "Adhikar" is almost entirely absent in India. Not point zero zero one per cent of three hundred million odd people ever live or think like that. No one can feel comfortable in a setting which is so obviously artificial. The Indian people expect other things from its budding industries. What would happen for instance if the mill industry of this country suddenly changed its policy and started producing kilts instead of dhoties. They just would not sell in this country and that goes for the film industry as well. In a country where education plays so small a part one has to bear in mind the limitations of the average picture goer and in consequence give him something which is within his powers of understanding.

TIME STANDS STILL!

Let us even take the sets. That ridiculous basement set elaborately decorated. I noticed for instance that with all the money spent on it, the director had not bothered to change the hands of the clock at any stage of the picture. It was obviously a painted clock, and you don't have painted clocks in sets like these, Mr. Director. As far as I can remember, they stood still at a quarter to eight all through that picture. In fact, at no time did one know in "Adhikar" whether it was night or day or mid-afternoon. Nor was there anything else in the picture to give any one a clue. All the women dressed the same whether it was morning, noon or night. And as for the girl who was an invalid and was put on a surgical bed, I thought it was the limit when she was made to wear the sort of dress which one would wear when going out. No sir, you just can't do that, not even if she is playing the part of a girl of unsound mind.

Also I have never seen anything look so horrible as the sight of those balloons which were put into a glass case for decoration in that same basement set. Where in any house of any rich man who can afford to have the things which the owner of the basement had, would you find balloons in a glass case? And you call that film direction? And there was much more in that picture in that same vein all of which I cannot remember now.



A shot from "It's True" a Saraswati social picture. Note the beautiful setting in which Motilal seems to leave behind such a darling companion.

"LOVE" OVER A CUP OF TEA

Let us take the dialogue. I confess that the vernaculars are not my strong point. I say this not to boast, but as a realisation of my limitations. But I know enough to follow the conversation except for certain unusual words. I also know enough to say that when a man says to a girl that he loves her, her reply in a picture is never: "But send first at least for a cup of tea." These are certain fundamental things in the making of a film which you must know before you attempt a picture. Direction does not consist of wheeling your camera all round the room and fixing it later on the subject. There is too much of this wandering camera done in "Adhikar". It is a form of camera effect which is hopelessly out of date. Today the approach is always straight and directed to the subject. So that when a man or a woman is singing a song, it is his face and expression that is shown, not the walls and the ceiling and the rest of the set.

I cannot judge "Adhikar" from the musical point of view. The songs were, judging from the faint applause they received, reasonably good and had some originality about them. Nothing to rave about.

I REGRET TO SAY!

This is the sort of impression I formed of a picture which I was given to understand was typical of modern Indian production. I would not mind it if it was just one isolated picture, but it is a serious matter when you are told that this a representative picture. Then you begin to take notice of it and to find out what there is in it which should be kept and what there is in it to be avoided. I have always been told that there are people connected with the film industry who believe that they have really achieved something and that the eyes of the world are fixed on them. I am told that Mr. Korda is interested in the Indian films, that his opinion of them is very high. And more, much more.

Now I do not know what is or is not Mr. Alexander Korda's reaction to the Indian films. In my opinion, Mr. Korda has not yet touched the heights which Hollywood has achieved. He may have produced a few isolated pictures, but there is not that consistency of production which characterises the houses of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Paramount. Even so, I say that I doubt very much if Mr. Korda would sit through the twelve thousand odd feet of "Adhikar" and at the end of it truthfully say that he thought the film industry had a great future. You who are in the film industry of this country will have to change your ways of film production before you get any reasonable recognition in the market of this world. Once you realise that and are willing to cast aside that little unjustified pride you feel in your very amateurish productions, you will have taken the first step towards building up an industry which to me has a great future.

Till then I regret to say you will not get any further.

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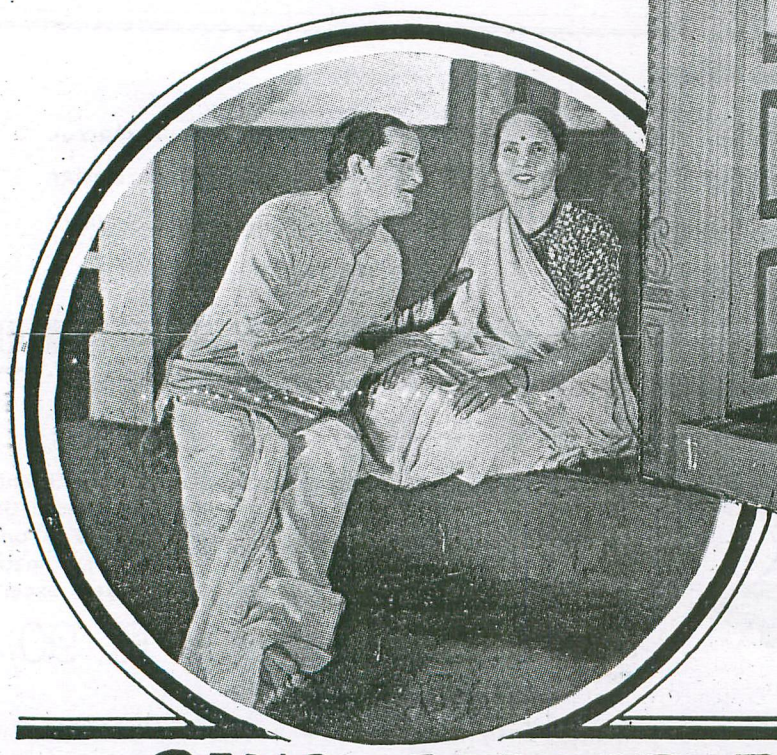
Directed by: GUNJAL:



INDIA CINE PICTURE's

CINE-COLOUR RELEASE

ROUND THE TOWN

(The reviews published under this section are useful both to the average cine-goer and the exhibitor. Several technical aspects which are of importance to the exhibitor in his bookings have been treated here in short, maintaining, at the same time, the casual interest of readers in general.)

"MY SON"

Producers: Prabhat Movietone—Story: Y. G. Joshi—Direction: K. Narayan Kale—Hindi Translation and Songs: Shrivastava "Anuj"—Art Direction: S. Fatehlal—Music: Keshavrao Bhole—Photography: V. Avadoot—Recording: S. Damle—Cast: .Shanta Hublikar, Ulhas, Mama Bhat, Vasant Thengdi, Vatsala Joshi, Balak Ram, Chhotu and Sunderabai—Released at Central Talkies, Bombay—Date of Release: 26th November, 1938.

When a story is wedded to mere idealism and divorced from exciting facets of practical life, it becomes a poor screen play. That is what has happened to this picture. Contrary to the usual expectations of success associated with Prabhat, this picture has become an experiment and time alone will prove whether it is to be an expensive one or not.

Story: Suresh is a clean, modern young man with journalistic ambitions. His father, a retired government officer, is however intensely orthodox and in his anxiety to secure a permanent and steady billet for his son wants his son to take up some government post.

In opposition to the wishes of his father, Suresh is running a small newspaper press inspite of great financial difficulties. Suresh is pursuing an ideal when his parents want him to be practical. With a tyranny born of true parental love, Suresh has many a clash with his headstrong parent. Sarojini is a rich heiress without any parents. The puritan simplicity of Suresh's life attracts her attention and she falls desperately in love with Suresh. Suresh while loving the girl in return, is however reluctant to express his mind due to the big difference in their financial status. Things soon become too hot for Suresh who has to face a strike by his press employees. The press passes out in the hands of an adventurer called Balvant and Suresh leaves his own home in utter desperation. The pangs of unresponded love drive Sarojini to contest a local municipal election against Suresh. Sarojini wins the election, but Suresh wins the esteem of the people. Very soon, there is a happy reconciliation, brought about rather suddenly and awkwardly, and Suresh and Sarojini meet in wedlock with the blessings of the parents.

Acting: Balak Ram as the young brother of the hero stands out with a very natural and sympathetic performance in comparison with the work of others. Vasant Thengdi as Balvant has a certain mannerism which suits the role he plays. His performance was however made unnecessarily stagy. Had the interpretation of the role been made more subtle and less bubbling, the portrayal would have secured more design and a greater psychological purpose. Ulhas as Suresh the hero proves too stoic for the present times. He seems to have aped the director's own performance in "Mahatma". He was hardly given any movement. A modern youth in the pursuit of an ideal should not be so passive.

Coming to Prabhat's new 'find' Shanta Hublikar, one should admit that the girl sings well and has a good voice to back her up. She was 'shot' very carefully all along in mid shots—a close-up being avoided with almost a religious monotony. And I wonder why. No attempt is made to register her finer emotions in close-ups even in sequences dominated by the inner and higher emotions of life. She is made to bounce and jump about, but that is not acting.

Mama Bhat as the father of Suresh was supposed to be a complex portrayal with love and hatred overlapping each other and idiosyncrasies punctuating saner emotions. What he has actually become is a paradoxical product which excites ridicule when pathos is intended. Mama Bhat's work does not contribute towards making the picture deliver the goods.

Production: Similar themes have often come to the screen, especially from Ranjit and Sagar Studios and a novelty in treatment was badly necessary to put over one more picture with the same central idea. The story material in this picture is rather thin and the development is generally unimaginative and at places sketchy, Situations have been unnecessarily stretched and songs have been put into places where they are least required or hardly expected. The whole affair needs patience to go through to the end. The direction is nervous and strained and seems to lack the capacity of reaching the intellectual heights of psychological understanding of the design in the theme. As a second attempt of this director, his work is certainly not an improvement and makes a third chance a hazard. The photography was not happy throughout though some indoor and outdoor shots were superb. Recordng in the first four reels was not satisfactory. The Hindi dialogues are an unholy mess of obsolete words. Already weak situations are made more weak by inappropriate and insipid language which lacks both vigour and thought. The Hindi dialogues have delivered the final finishing stroke to a picture that fails to provoke or sustain any interest. Merely sticking up together several rhyming words does not make up for the art and intelligence in composing songs for the screen. The songs of this picture, though some of them are well tuned musically, fail to attract simply because they are composed in words with no sense and no melody. The music of the

picture can be called good with an inclination for the typical provincial school.

Points of Appeal: It is a Prabhat picture, but unfortunately it misses the famous Prabhat "touch." Picture production is always an uncertain business and our sympathies go with the producers. The music in the picture is pleasant at places and the picture is moderately entertaining.

PROFESSOR WAMAN

Producers: Ranjit Movietone—Story: Gunvantrai Acharya Direction: Manibhai Vyas—Photography: Sazu Naik—Recording: Thakorbhai Patel—Music: Jnan Dutt —Dialogues: R. S. Rammayae—Songs: Santoshi —Cast: E. Billimoria, Mazhar, Sunita, Sitara, Beg, Rajkumari, Wahidan .and others—Released at: West End Cinema, Bombay—Date of Release: 10th December 1938.

It is a crime and mystery drama mainly intended to provide a thrilling entertainment. The story is well sustained throughout and its unfolding on the screen becomes interesting and gripping to the laymind. As the director's maiden effort on the screen, from this studio, the technical direction of the picture deserves a little more than usual praise.

The Story: Professor Harnam harnesses the moon rays and prepares an oxide product, which if taken by a human being makes him a monster and criminal. His brother Professor Waman is alarmed at the discovery and thinks of preparing an antidote, but in the meantime the contents of the bottle are swallowed by the impressionable young daughter of Harnam, Anjani, in a fit of a love quarrel with Kishore, Chief Detective Inspector. Harnam in the meanwhile dies and the responsibility of looking after Anjani falls on the shoulders of Professor Waman. Very soon a series of murders most cleverly committed breaks out and the police are baffled. The wealthy sinners of the city are the main victims and no one knows how and by whom the murders are committed. Suspicion falls upon Umadevi, a bold adventuress. In turn everyone including Professor Waman is suspected, but the professor is busy experimenting on the antidote. One by one people are killed and Kishore, the Chief detective, is at his wits end. He arrests Professor Waman and locks him up in jail from where he escapes to complete his antidote and prevent another murder. The police give a chase and very soon bullets whistle past. The professor receives a bullet, but not before he has manufactured the antidote, which whilst dying he instructs Kishore to administer to Anjani his niece who has been committing the murders under the monstrous spell of the drug. There is a happy ending.

Acting: E. Billimoria as Kishore gives quite a good performance. Sunita as Anjani is tolerably good though her dialogues need some more polishing. Sitara as Umadevi is excellent and gives one beautiful dance. Mazhar as Professor Waman is the best of the whole lot. His portrayal has some genuine feeling behind it. Begg is hardly any good and he has not much to do.

Production: The picture is well taken. If the scenario had been more imaginative the pictures would have been more effective.

Jagdish, Bikram Kapur and Ramkumari in "Street Singer" a New Theatres picture running so well at the Minerva Talkies.

In crime and mystery dramas, the element of fear must be used to frighten the mind of the audience. This is done by use of frightening sound or fearful action. The mystery in the picture however is well maintained, till the last minute. The picture is very well directed technically. The dialogues are quite suitable. The music, however is not much of an attraction, though Wahidan sings two songs rather well. Photography is good and so is the sound. The song composition is common. E. Billimoria's attempt to sing a song is not well received.

Points of Appeal: The picture will appeal to all those who are fond of reading mystery stories. Quite a good picture for school going children. The mystery and suspense in the picture contribute largely to its attraction as an entertainment.

"DIVORCE"

Producers: Minerva Movietone—Story and Scenario: Gajanan Jagirdar and Pandit Anand Kumar—Dialogues and Songs: Anand Kumar—Music: Mir Saheb Photography: S. D. Patel—Audiography: M. Edulji—Direction: Sohrab Mody—Cast: Naseem, Sheela, Shanta Dutt, Sunalini Devi, Gajanan Jagirdar, Navin Yagnik, Prem Adib and Others—Released at: Krishna Talkies, Bombay—Date of Release: 30th December 1938.

There is hardly any message in this picture as the writer himself does not seem to have made up his mind till the end about what he started to tell the world. Incidentally he has forgotten at several places what he started with. The picture has therefore become a hotchpotch of several ideas, some experimental, some enterprising and the remaining unconvincing.

The Story: If this is to be called a story it has very modest pretensions. Roopa and Niranjan are married but on a flimsy excuse,—all over a dog—Roopa walks out on him to take a divorce. "Andhi" a newspaper man is married to Shanta, but he drives his wife out. Roopa remarries Amarnath a screen actor, who spoons with Menaka a screen actress. All this muddle goes on against the wishes of the old order. Roopa's married life with Amarnath soon turns into a tragedy, while Niranjan himself on the verge of falling in love with Shanta tries to restore her to "Andhi" her husband. But in doing so she commits suicide and Niranjan carries the corpse to the cremation ground. But before the corpse is burnt out, another is found in the body of Roopa who dashes herself to death in an automobile. The hero, Niranjan,

Pandit Anand Kumar, this excellent writer has given a refreshing simplicity to the dialogues of "Divorce" (Minerva). He gives a bold promise of becoming one of our leading Hindi writers.

becomes philosophic mutters something incoherent and the story ends. The whole affair looks queer and sounds funny.

Acting: Naseem as Roopa looks far different now. She has added weight allround, and her face looks bloated. She had little expression before, but even that is now covered by solid fat. Her work in the picture is apologetic and one cannot understand why! Navin Yagnik as Niranjan the hero, possesses a nose which is rather too long and in consequence dominates his other features effectively. One finds that big, long nose blowing in and out throughout the picture to supply the demands of emotional acting. Vimla Vasheesta speaks her dialogues with a bad provincial tone. Shanta Dutt is hardly suitable as a "screen star", which role she plays so unconvincingly. Gajanan Jagirdar has hardly anything to do. He loafs through the picture with an abandon which suggests that he has nothing to do with the story. The pity is, he wrote his own part. Prem Adib as Amarnath is just no good. In the midst of all these disheartening performances Sheela has given a good and sympathetic portrayal as Shanta. Her dialogues are good and her voice is eminently suitable for sad songs. Sheela holds the interest of the audience but she has not been sufficiently exploited.

Production: The direction of the picture is weak. The photography is indifferent and the sound recording called for more care. The dialogues are pretty good, and certainly easier to understand when one remembers the previous pictures of Minerva. The song composition is quite neat. The music can be called rather good. Songs Nos. 1, 2, 3 are very nicely tuned though indifferently sung. The boatman doling out philosophy in and out of season did not speak much for the imagination of either the writer or the director.

Points of Appeal:

The theme in the picture is set out as a poser and might appeal to some. Sheela's work is certainly a recommendation.

"MR. X"

Producers: Prakash Pictures—Story and Direction: Dwarka Khosla—Photography: G. N. Shirodkar—Audiography: L. J. Bhatt—Music: Shankerrao, Vyas and Laloobhai—Processing: Vishrambhai—Editing: Kamlakar—Dialogues and Songs: S. L. Shrivastav "Anuj"—Cast: Ratan Bai, Jayant, Ranjit, H. Shivdasani, Indurani, Anant Marathe, Lalloobhai and Others—Released at: Super Talkies, Bombay—Date of Release: 23rd December 1938.

This picture takes us back ten years which means that out of 25

imagine one more insipid and pas- years of the existence of the Indian film industry, barely 15 years' progress is seen on the screen. In comparison with "Poornima", the previous release of Prakash, this picture is a great disappointment from all sides.

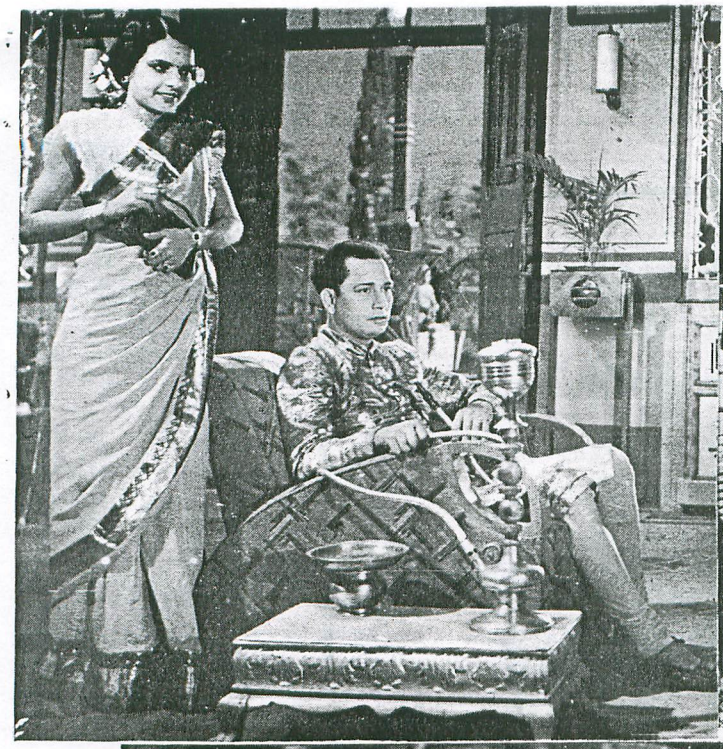
The Story: It is a crime-cum-detection yarn based on nonsense. But even nonsense must have some school or some continuity. This story contains nonsense that neither tickles nor convinces. At stages it becomes tiresome. Surendra and Hemlata are friends. They are young and promising. Hemlata is educated while Surendra is a poet. They silently love each other, but before they could give that love any concrete expression, Prem a young lawyer steps in and marries Hemlata. Surendra tries his hand at suicide, but fails and is hurt in consequences. A villain in Harish steps in for no earthly reason. In fact one fails to understand why this character is at all put in. The story would have been better off without him. However Harish creates a few weak moments of excitement by his villaneous plans and escapades. Prem and Hemlata are happy till the arrival of a son in the family, but then suspicion takes its turn in the plan of things and Prem turns out his wife suspecting his wife's relations with Surendra. The story gradually travels to a climax which finds its setting in a courtroom, wherein Hemlata is hauled up on a charge of murder of Harish. Prem arrives and explains things and everything is O.K. thereafter. Even the little boy Jagdish shakes hands with the judge.

Acting: Ratan Bai as Hemlata is supposed to be the piece de resistance of the affair. That she does not prove to be so in reality is the misfortune of the audience. Ratan Bai looks ill and haggard. Her make up is careless—particularly on the eyelids. She however sings two songs pretty well, but the indifferent recording does not permit us to enjoy them. Jayant as Prem tried to do something, but he was hardly given a chance. I have seen poets in life, but I can hardly sive than Surendra played by Ranjit. Even his poetry—we call them songs in our pictures—sounds dead. H. Shivdasani as Harish is unnecessary and so is his work. Indurani as Radha the sister of the villain looks more like a cartoon. Laloobhai as Munshi seemes to think that the screen is just another stage for his senseless and nauseating frolics. The little good work we find in this picture, is done by little Anant Marathe. He beats the senior brigade hollow.

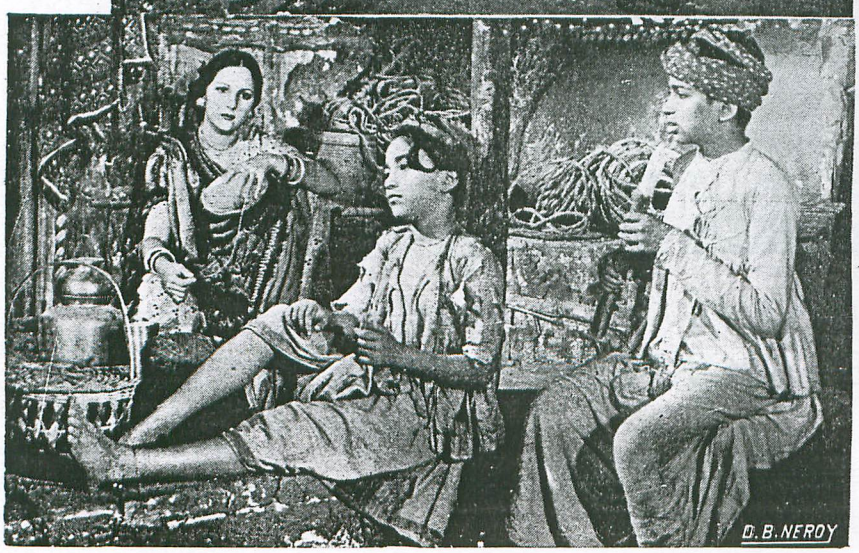
Production: The entire technical work is full of defects and errors. The sound is c areless and so is the photography. Khosla's direction provides the best piece of misdirection of every aspect of film production. The dialogues are absolutely commonplace while the songs are very poor.

Prakash should try some thing better and more ambitious in future. They have enough experience to back them up, if they undertook to produce social pictures with thought provoking themes.

A shot from "Street Singer" now running to crowded houses at the Minerva Talkies.



Some interesting shots from "The Kick" a Ranjit picture directed by A. R. Kardar.



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RANJIT MOVIETONE:

"Bazigar" directed by Mr. Manibhai Vyas was released at the West End Cinema during the month and drew an appreciably good crowd. "Sant Tulsidas" is getting finishing touches from director Jayant Desai and from the rushes seen it is expected that the Ranjit studio will break box-office records for 1939 with this stupendous devotional picture.

In between the numerous activities Sardar Chandulal Shah, is carefully taking several scenes of "Achhoot", which picture again is expected to be another record breaker. Chaturbhuj Doshi is busy with a social comedy while director Kardar has atlast completed "The Kick."

SAGAR MOVIETONE:

"Service Ltd." a picture directed by Mr. Luhar was released at the Imperial Talkies in Bombay. "Ladies Only", the next release of the studio will open the Pathe Cinema which is now under the control of the proprietors of Sagar Movietone. Director Virendra Desai is shooting in the indoors a social comedy, while director Mehboob has atleast completed his social picture called "The Only Way." Director Nandlal is busy with the paper work of "Prithvi Vallabh" and another social picture.

BOMBAY TALKIES:

"Bhabi" has proved a tremendous success at the Roxy. The star appearance of Renuka Devi has been taken as a welcome sign of better class ladies taking up the film career. At the studios, they have already started shooting another picture, the name of which, is for the present kept a secret, as usual, probably because they themselves do not know what it has to be named and in this picture again Devika Rani will not be seen in the stellar role. We wonder whether there is a new girl coming into it once again.

PRAKASH PICTURES:

"Mr. X", a mystery thriller did not draw as well as was expected by the producers. At the studios "Hero No. 1" another crime thriller is expected to be ready in the first week of February. "Leather Face" and "Protia" are two other thrillers under production.

WADIA MOVIETONE:

"Flying Ranee" has been released at the Lamington Talkies. "Jungle King" is receiving finishing touches from Mr. Ghadialli. "Vijay Kumar", "Punjab Mail" and "Jai Swadesh" are other pictures under production.

Mr. S. V. Kirparam, the Editor of "Movies" is a complete institution by himself. A friend to all Kirparam is a loveable personality. As a journalist, however, he is on the wrong track, while he could be one of our best production managers for any of our mismanaged studios.

GENERAL FILMS:

"Industrial India" has shifted its venue to the Kohinoor Cinema in another part of the city where it is drawing very well. "Pati Patni", a social picture begun by director Atorthy and completed by director Gunjal, is now lying ready for release. The future plans of the Fazalbhoy Brothers constitute two pictures under the direction of A. R. Kardar and if the proposed merger with Sagar's comes off, several more producing units will go into production.

RUBY PICTURES:

"Prem-ki-Jyot" has been completed and is lying ready for release. In the meanwhile the proprietors are thinking of taking up another social picture in hand.

MINERVA MOVIETONE:

"Divorce" proved to be a bit of a disappointment when it was released at the Krishna Talkies during the month. The next picture to come on the screen will be "Pukar" which is now being given the finishing touches by Mr. Sohrab Mody.

EVEREST PICTURES:

Mr. Ezra Mir has completed the out-doors, which are typically gypsy, of "Sitara", the maiden picture of Everest Pictures. The music in this picture is likely to prove sensational, as it is not only unusual but is marvellously melodious. After a long time Mr. Rafique Gaznavi has got a chance to show to the world what exactly he knows of music. "Sitara" will perhaps be one of our best box-office attractions of the year.

KRISHIN MOVIETONE:

"Zamana" has shifted from the Imperial Cinema to the Novelty Talkies in another part of the city. The picture proved sensational in its appeal and the people who saw it enjoyed a small holiday of big tears. The picture is tremendously educative in its message and it won the admiration of national leaders like Mrs. Leelavati Munshi and Mr. Satyamurti. Mr. Ram Daryani will now be taking up a new social subject with another thundering theme called "Hindusthan Hamara."

PARAMOUNT FILM CO.:

"Madhu Bansari" is due to be released at the Lamington Talkies after the "Flying Ranee." The picture is reported to have received a big offer for outright sale. "Golden Gang" under the direction of Kikubhai Desai the boss, is now getting the finishing touches. Mr. Nanubhai Vakil is directing "Aflatoon Aurat." As an experiment, this studio has decided to produce

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by a Boy and a Girl in

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Sunetra, Vasant and Varne.

Director: **BHAGWAN**

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in

DEVATA

(MARATHI)

If "Brahmachari" has been a success
This one is a Greater One.

●

A "SUPREME" RELEASE

The Story by: **V. S. Khandekar**

●

Direction by: **Vinayak**

a picture in the Punjabi language with an all Punjabi cast.

MOHAN PICTURES:

"Midnight Mail" has been completed under the direction of Mr. K. Amarnath, while director A. M. Khan has made considerable progress with "Lady Cavalier" and "Ransangram." The Mohan Pictures people have a very ambitious programme for the year 1939, as they propose to produce half a dozen fast thrillers for the box-offices.

POONA

SARASWATI CINETONE:

"It's True" is now in the editing room and is likely to come on the screen sometime in the month of February. The studio reports suggest that "It's True" is likely to become one of the most popular hits of the season, as it contains a new theme with an entirely novel treatment.

Another picture under production at the Saraswati studios is "Bhagwa Zenda" under the experienced direction of Nanasaheb Sarpotdar. Several out-door scenes have been taken and from the rushes seen, it promises to be a really first class picture.

PRABHAT FILM CO:

It has been definitely decided not to give the leading role in Mr. Shantaram's new picture to Miss. Shanta Apte. The responsibility therefore, has fallen on the slender shoulders of Mrs. Shantabai Hublikar, who will be gracing the screen as Mr. Shantaram's heroine of the story. There is still sometime for the picture to go into production, but it is expected that by the last week of February the rehearsals will be completed and the shooting will start.

KOLHAPUR

HUNS PICTURES:

The remarkable success of "Brahmachari" has changed the entire fortunes of these producers. "Brahmachari" has proved a big gold mine to the Royal Film Circuit who bought the world rights of the said picture. It is breaking old records and making new ones all over the country.

At the studios, "Devata", a remarkably powerful story by Mr. Khandekar is lying entirely ready for release. This superb picture is likely to prove an admirable successor to "Brahmachari." The pictures under production at present are "Brandy-chi-Batli" and "Sukhacha Shodh", two social pictures with themes that are likely to prove very popular. In the former one Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, our national leader is expected to give a lecture on the benefits of prohibition.

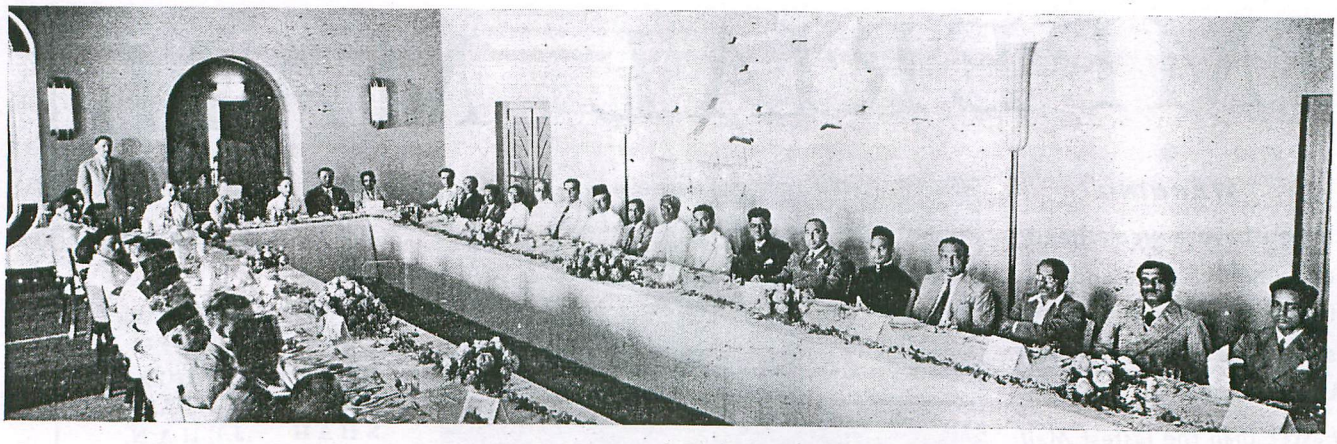
ARUNA PICTURES:

"Netaji Palkar" under the direction of Bhal G. Pendharkar is being steadily shot at the Huns studio. The picture is likely to be completed sometime in the month of April.

CALCUTTA

NEW THEATRES:

"Dushman" is getting finishing touches from director Nitin Bose and it is expected to be ready for release by the time this issue is in your hand. It is reported to be a great drama of human souls which revolves round the theme of the dreadful disease of tuberculosis. Director Mullick is shooting "Bar Didi" in Hindi and Bengali, while that old juggler Devaki Bose is busy with the shooting of "Snake



Let us attempt to name some of them—the guests at the Taj at the luncheon in honour of Mr. Baburao Pai given by Mr. J. J. Patel with Sardar Chandulal Shah presiding. Beginning from the right corner 1. Mr. Narayan, 2. Lala Alopi Prasad, 3. Mr. S. Fatehlal (Prabhat), 4. Mr. Mohanlal (Mohan Pictures), 5. Mr. Kapurchand (Kapurchand Ltd.), 6. Rai Saheb Chuni Lall (Bombay Talkies), 7. Mr. Baburao Pendharkar (Huns), 8. Mr. V. Shantaram (Prabhat), 9. Sardar Chandulal Shah (Ranjit), 10. Mr. Baburao Pai (the Chief Guest), 10. Mr. Jagannath Patel (Bauer Representative and the Host), 11. Mr. M. A. Fazalbhoy (Fazalbhoy Ltd.), 12. Seth Chimanlal Desai (Sagar), 13. Mr. Kevalchand Mehta (Kapurchand Ltd.), 14. Mr. R. G. Torney (Saraswati), 15. Mr. P. C. Kapadia (Evergreen), 16. Mr. Sohrab Mody (Minerva), (In the cross row) 17. Mr. Abbas (Bombay Chronicle), 18. Mr. Baburao Patel (Filmindia), 19. Mr. K. S. Hirlekar (Secretary, I.M.P. Congress), 20. Mr. Gopalswamy (Times), 21. Mr. Camer Saleh (Filmindia).

Charmer." "Kapalkundala" in Hindi is being steadily shot by Mr. Phani Muzumdar, the man who gave us "Street Singer." Altogether, the New Theatre studios are working in full swing and the directors are busy every minute.

SOUTH INDIA

SARATHI FILMS LTD. (Madras)

With "Mala Pilla" doing good business in the South, another social picture called "Peasant's Daughter" is being rehearsed in the Motion Picture Combine studios and the picture will go into shooting early next month. After completion of this one, "Battle of Palnad" will go into production.

NEWTONE STUDIOS (Madras)

Yet another sound stage with up-to-date machinery is being installed in this big studio. The hospitality and help which these people extend to their patrons, have induced several independent producers to produce their pictures in this studio. Already four big producing units are operating here and a few more are on the waiting list to engage the studio floors for shooting. Vaunini Pictures' "Vandemataram" will be completed before the end of the month. "Tiruneelakantanayanar" is fast nearing completion. "Saku Bai" featuring Miss Aswathamma is being steadily shot and "Chitra" the maiden attempt of Deepam Films will go into shooting before the end of the month.

ASANDAS CLASSICAL TALKIES (Madras)

Producer Asandas will take up "Mani Mekhalai" as his next picture with Miss K. B. Sundarambal in the lead at the Tollywood Studios in Calcutta. Mr. M. L. Tandon will direct the picture.

THE LONDON FILM EXCHANGE (Madras)

The distribution rights of "Mohini Basmasura" are held by these people. The picture will be released in several important centres in the South early this month; and from the advertisements that appear in English papers, it is expected that the picture will have a good run at the box-offices.

KALIDAS FILMS (Erode)

After the luke warm reception given to "Kannappa Nayanar" the producers have thought of producing another picture with a social theme. An influential cast led by K. P. Kesavan, and supported by Miss Radhabai and Mathuram, is scheduled to play in the picture and there is every chance of the new picture being a paying proposition.

MAHALAKSHMI STUDIOS (Madras)

The recent fire in . . . The Motion Picture Producers Combine Studios is responsible for the misfortune that was shared by several producers who had their pictures under production. Mahalakshmi's "Inbasagaran" that much talked of picture was burnt. The producers have started 'thinking'! Rajgopal Talkies' "Krishna Thoothu" was also burnt but they have started re-shooting the picture.

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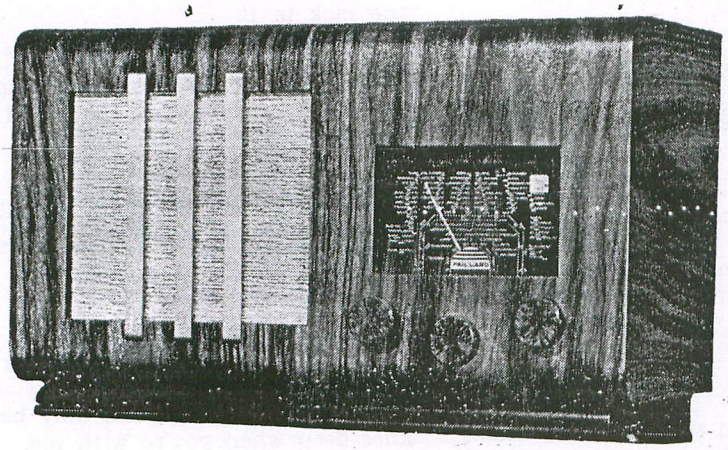

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Kicks and Kisses

Many a girl has gotten first-hand information in a second-hand car.

* * *

Men want women to be like stars in their lives; come out at night and disappear in the morning.

* * *

"I'll bet you were furious when you came home and found that roomer in your wife's arms," said one landlord to another. And the other thundered, "Yes, even then she couldn't make him pay his rent!"

* * *

Even smooth whiskey, can make a man get rough with a girl.

* * *

All a girl has to do to get some men playing with fire is show them a bit of hose.

* * *

When a girl has a vacant look, it means that some man is occupying her mind.

* * *

Many girls have been taken in when they thought they were just being taken out.

* * *

"Handsome, haven't times changed a lot? Thirty years ago men used to worship at women's feet."

"Sure! In those days it was only their ankles that showed."

* * *

"I'll bet you hated to hear the alarm clock ringing this morning," guessed the first stenog. And the second said, "I'll say I did! It woke my mother up just as I was getting into the house."

* * *

When a woman finds she's hooked up with a worm, she usually starts fishing for something better.

* * *

When the animal starts coming out in a girl, she's willing to be the goat for a fellow that wants a pet.

"I had a terrible time when I went motoring with old Mr. van Doughbags."

"Wouldn't you think a man like that would act his age."

"That's just the trouble. He did."

* * *

Oddly enough, the apple of a man's eye is very often some other fellow's peach.

* * *

A fellow never believes that love is blind, until some girl blackens both his eyes.

* * *

A fellow who burns the candle at both ends is usually found with a little flame in the dark.

* * *

The honeymoon is the morning after the knot before.

* * *

"When I visited the theatre back-stage, one of the stagehands for a prank locked me up with the chorus girls in their dressing room."

"Did you settle with him after you were left out?"

"Yes, I gave him a hundred dollars."

* * *

When a certain lass heard that people see things they shouldn't see at the movies she cooed, "Well, they wouldn't if only all the loving couples would sit in the last row."

* * *

A stitch in time has saved many a nudist colony.

* * *

Instead of trying to bury the past, the golddigger tries to dig up a present.

* * *

Girls who never play ball, seldom make a catch.

The model who is the apple of an artist's eye, is generally peeled.

* * *

Never marry an astronomer. He is always searching for stars and heavenly bodies.

* * *

A girl who throws herself at a man seldom makes a hit.

* * *

The bird that flies the highest is the night owl.

* * *

If an old flame burns a fellow up, a new match will set him off.

Sometimes the girl that can't knit has the best yarn.

* * *

A fellow who tells a girl that she's all the world to him, usually feels that the world owes him a giving.

* * *

The worst kind of Peeping Toms are gals who don't close their eyes when you kiss them.

* * *

A girl's pins hold a man better than pasting him.

* * *

When a girl's fit as a fiddle she needs to be played.

* * *

The modern woman doesn't mind a man showing his hand if he has the jack in it.

* * *

American women are the most beautiful women in the world. You can see the figures in proof.

* * *

You gotta burn the midnight oil to carry a torch for a night club baby.

* * *

The girl: Stop!

The Boy: But I am up to my neck in love.

The girl: Nix! You can only be knee-deep when you're with me.

* * *

When a man gets wound up and goes cuckoo over a woman, her hour has struck.

* * *

He: I'm going to kiss you, and thrill you too!

She: Really, What are you going to do after you kiss me?

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